The image shows the front cover of an old book. The cover is decorated with a marbled paper pattern featuring large, irregular, dark brown or mahogany-colored spots separated by a network of thin, dark veins. Interspersed among these are smaller, more vibrant spots of red and yellow. A white ruler is placed horizontally across the upper portion of the cover, showing measurements in inches. In the bottom-left corner, a small, rectangular white paper label is affixed, containing the text 'D C', '715', and '.M14' stacked vertically.

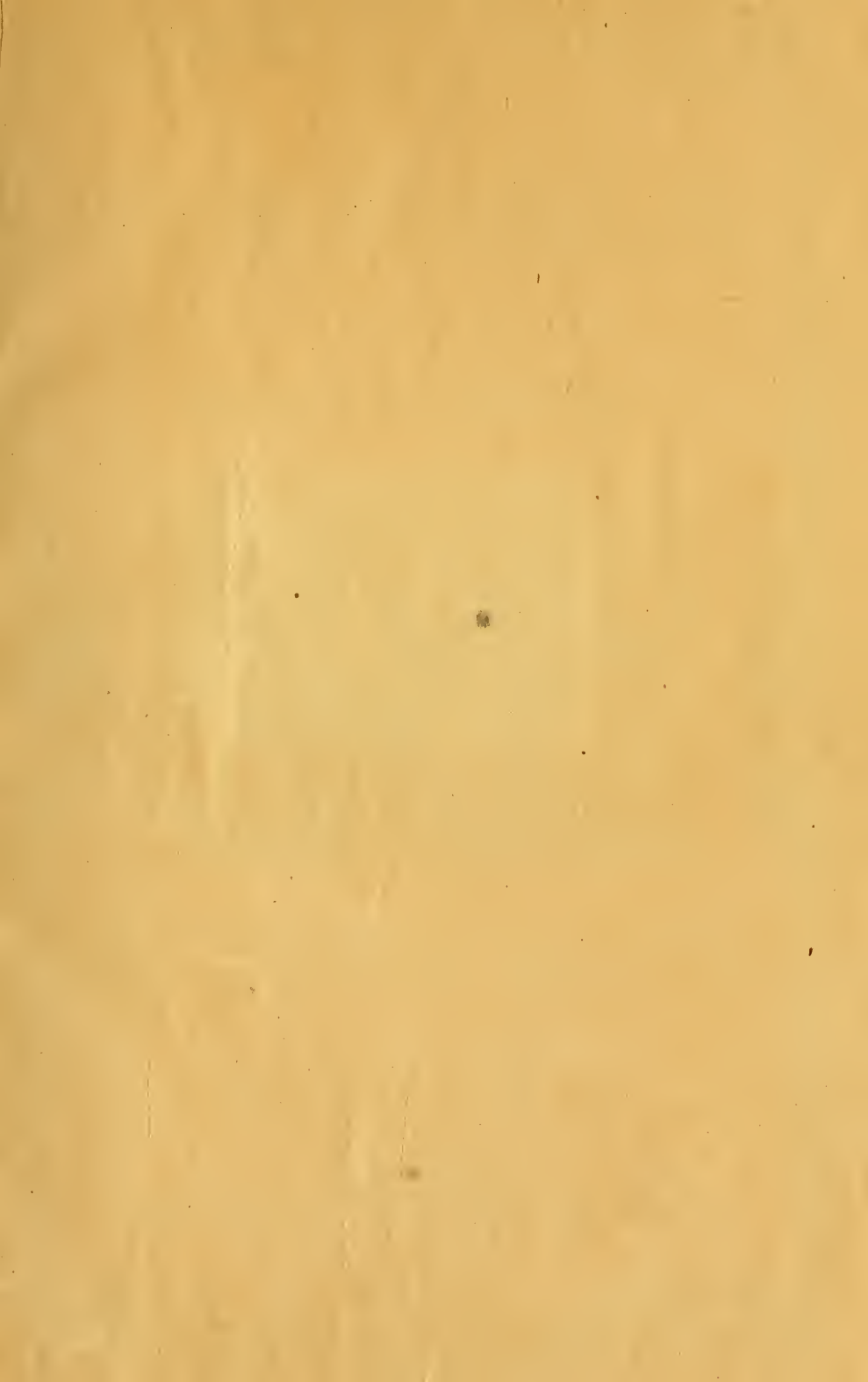
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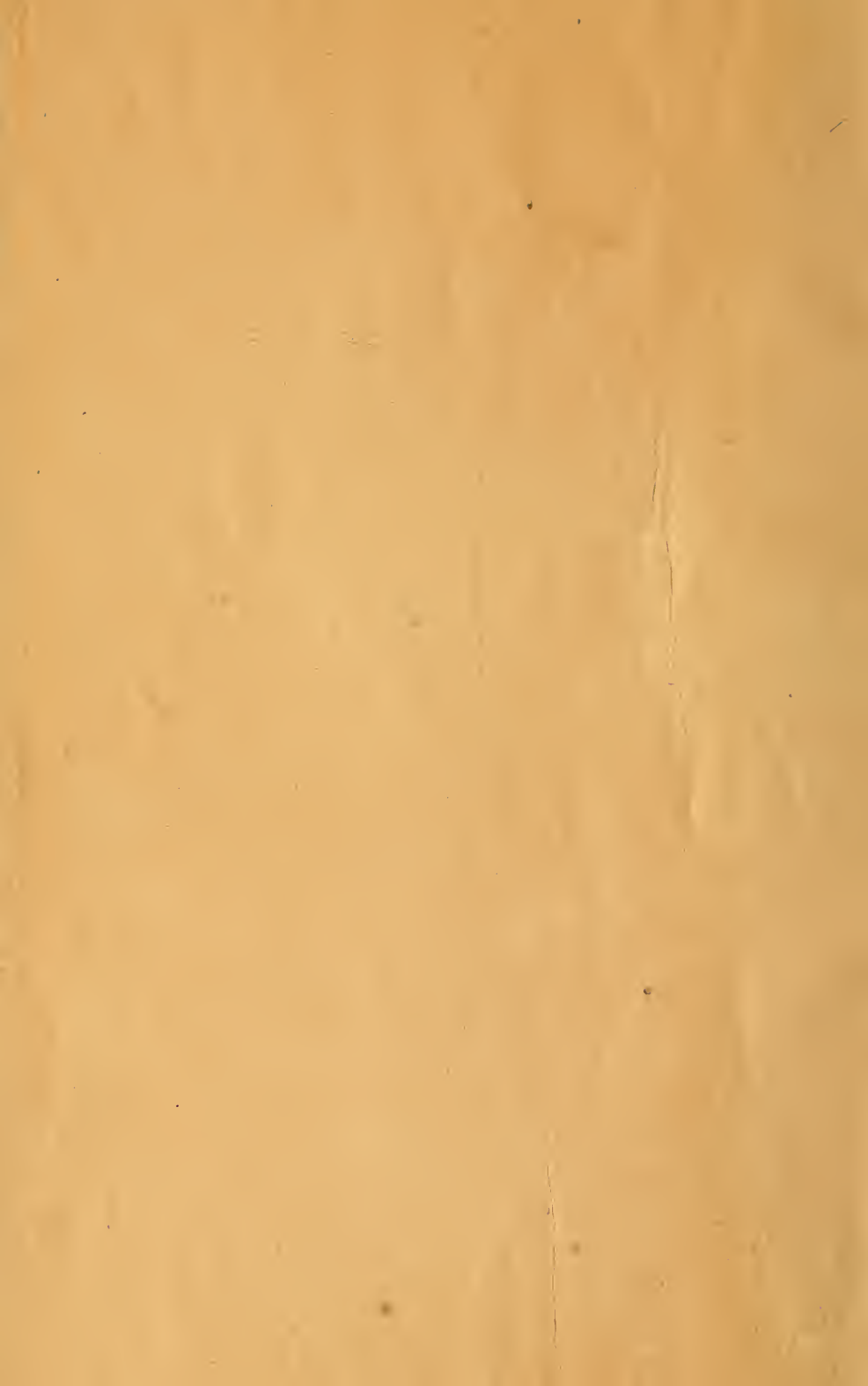
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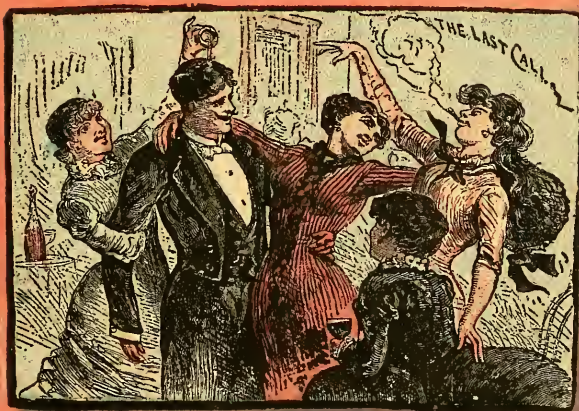




PARIS UNVEILED

OR AN

Expose of Vice and Crime.



IN THE

GAY FRENCH CAPITOL

Translated Expressly for Richard K. Fox

PUBLISHED BY

RICHARD K. FOX, PROPRIETOR OF THE POLICE GAZETTE
FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK

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IN LOVE WITH THE PRETTY WAITRESS.



PARIS UNVEILED

OR AN

EXPOSE OF VICE AND CRIME

IN THE

Gay French Capital

BY A

2/2954 CELEBRATED FRENCH DETECTIVE.



TRANSLATED EXPRESSLY FOR RICHARD K. FOX.

PUBLISHED BY

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1889

PARIS UNVEILED.

A STARTLING EXPOSE BY M. G. MACE, EX-CHIEF OF DETECTIVES OF THE FRENCH
CAPITAL, OF THE VICES OF THE MODERN SODOM.

(EXPRESSLY TRANSLATED FOR RICHARD K. FOX.)

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

A MORNING WITH THE PREFECT OF POLICE.

At No. 7 Boulevard du Palais is one of the entrances of the City Hall.

So far as outward appearances go, this is by no means one of the principal doors of the building. It is, none the less, considerably the most important.

As everybody knows the Prefect of Police, wandering official who has no permanent headquarters, temporarily (that is to say, continuously) resides at that address. For the entrance on the Boulevard du Palais, which is scarcely to be distinguished from those of his neighbors, gives access to the private domicile as well as to the public offices of the Prefect.



CHIEFS IN COUNCIL.

These latter, which ought to be within easy reach of persons having business with them, are perched up aloft at an altitude which very few of the Mansards of old Paris have so far attained. No less than seventy-nine steps of staircase separate them from the ground floor.

The vestibule is ornamented with a large pier glass, which permits visitors to scrutinize themselves from head to foot, and thus be more at ease about their appearance than their consciences.

The day we introduce the reader to this interesting institution is remarkable for the bustle and animation which prevail there.

A Prefect who has lost his "pull" with the powers that be is surrendering his office and a luckier successor is taking it off his hands. The moving out of the one and the moving in of the other are taking place simultaneously.

The incoming Prefect finds it difficult to conceal his satisfaction, and overflows with the very laudable ambition to excel his predecessor.

The outgoing Prefect takes away with him a lot of unpleasant memories, some concern for his future, and a genuine regret to be divorced from his authority.

Everybody knows that Prefects of Police are supplied gratis with houseroom, furniture, heat, light, house linen, crockery and everything necessary for a private establishment. In the headquarters, the private apartments are situated on the second floor. On the day we introduce our reader to them, they were cluttered up by a lot of zealous subordinates overseen and directed by an officer with the rank of "brigadier."

Some were sweeping carpets, others washing windows, others shaking curtains. Brooms, cloths and feather dusters were all hard at work.

"Had I better send the kitchen things to be retinned?" inquired the brigadier of the official in charge.

"Not at all. All they need is a good rubbing up. The tins have outlasted the Prefect. Perhaps they'll do the same by his successor."

"How about the bedding?"

"T'll take care of it."

While this sort of thing was going on in the main saloon, just behind the prefectorial sanctum, two men were

hard at work therein. They were the new Prefect and his nephew who served him in the capacity of private secretary. With praiseworthy industry they were both carefully taking note of the vast operations of the police department, daily threatened, as it is, constantly attacked in the rear, and still none the less always acting for the intelligent and laborious population of Paris, of which it is the protection in good as well as in evil times.

It was 10 o'clock A. M. Opening the door of the prefectural sanctum an usher announced:

"The General Secretary."

After a cordial handshaking (for he was an old personal friend of the new Prefect) the two great functionaries began to converse.

"I quite agree with you, and I will even go so far as to admit that I am not at all easy about some of our new men. To be frank, some of the memoranda in my possession are anything but encouraging. There are any number of candidates, who are shoved forward by 'influence,' who are by no means equal to the exigencies of active service."

"Very well. We must depend on our own judgment instead of yielding to the pressure of interested parties. I decline to go in for a general beheading."

"My view exactly."

Here the door opened and the usher announced the arrival of the two Chiefs of the Division of General Control and of the Chief of the Municipal Police.

"It is the hour for official reports," said the Prefect,



THE FIGHT AT "MANILLA'S."

"How do you get on with your overhauling of the *personelle* of the department?" asked the Prefect.

"Well, I've put in a good deal of hard work, and I must admit that the sterling qualities of the old staff have made a very strong impression on me. I really have been able to mark only ten names for dismissal."

"Ten names? That is quite a number, isn't it? Our desire to introduce reform ought not to lead us to wholesale dismissals of men who do their duty. There are special agents who have come up from the bottom grades—men who, by dint of courage, prudence and professional skill, have managed to rise to high rank—men who are of great value to the force. They have a right to feel themselves established in their positions. It is the best thing to help an employee carry out his work faithfully. That is why I say do your overhauling with moderation and judgment."

"and we will resume our conversation this evening."

The General Secretary made his exit and the different chiefs of the service were introduced.

The Chief of the Second Division submitted to the Prefect for his signature a general order relating to hacks and cabs, and communicated sundry reports of dangerous, objectionable or unwholesome establishments. He retired with instructions to exercise renewed diligence in dealing with all persons adulterating the necessities of life.

The Controller-General reported an inquest which had taken place on the body of a man arrested for an offense against public morals, who had committed suicide by hanging himself, with his suspenders, in his cell at a police station. The responsibility for the act rested with a young police officer, who had failed to obey the rule requiring a constant inspection of prisoners.

When the Controller-General retired, it was the turn of the Chief of the First Division. After submitting several reports to the Prefect, he requested permission to grant the attendance of an officer in plain clothes at a wedding which, so there was reason to believe, was to be the scene of an outbreak on the part of a cast-off mistress of the bridegroom.

"Who asks for this concession?"

"Monsieur L—, Counsellor of State. He marries Mlle. T—."

"And who is the person whom they expect to be annoyed by?"

"A married woman, separated from her husband. Monsieur L. has broken off with her a long time."

"Well, we must prevent such a scandal. Is this sort of thing common?"

"Altogether too common."

"Do you think the people who ask for such protection deserve it?"

raid on seventeen tramps in the Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois.

Second Precinct.—Atrocious assault with a knife, made by a "lover" on one of the inmates of the house of ill-repute of the woman Greff in the Rue St. Foy.

Third Precinct.—A child of five killed by being run over at six o'clock by a milkman's wagon in the Rue du Temple.

"Why is it," inquired the Prefect, "that milkmen and butchers are so addicted to reckless driving? We must put an end to the practice."

"All right," replied the Chief. Then he went on:

Fourth Precinct.—Nothing.

Fifth Precinct.—Nothing.

"Two model precincts."

Sixth Precinct.—A howl and riot among students over a lot of prostitutes, in the Rue Monsieur le Prince."

"The usual student 'lark,' I suppose."

Seventh Precinct.—A serious disturbance and fight in



AN INTERRUPTED WEDDING.

"Not always. On the contrary, it has been applied for by men who have seduced and abandoned innocent young girls."

"What—do you mean to say the department interferes to protect the marriages of men of that sort?"

"We have got to do so, in order to prevent, in some instances, a serious breach of the peace. In this particular case Monsieur L. is deserving of great sympathy, and nobody at all familiar with the facts of the case holds him in any way blameworthy."

It was now the turn of the Chief of the Municipal Police, of whom the Prefect inquired:

"How did Paris behave last night?"

"You shall judge for yourself, sir."

Saying which he read the following report:

First Precinct.—Attempted assassination of a chief cook in the Rue Valois by one of his dishwashers. A

the Avenue Lowendall. Two soldiers and a civilian badly injured. The military authorities notified.

Eighth Precinct.—Two arrests for crimes against public decency, in the Cours La Reine.

Ninth Precinct.—Three arrests of children on the Boulevard des Italiens for begging.

Tenth Precinct.—Attempted suicide by a young woman from the Quây Lemappes. She threw herself in the canal and was rescued by two officers and taken to the St. Louis Hospital.

"What was her motive?"

"Destitution."

"Well, we must do something for her relief."

"I have ordered a full inquiry to be made into her case, and to-morrow I shall allow her 100 francs."

"I wouldn't wait till to-morrow. To poor wretches like her every day seems like a century."

"Just as you say."

Eleventh Precinct.—An unknown person broke the arm of Madame Capiton, wine merchant on the Rue du Faubourg du Temple. Dangerous wound. Motive supposed to be revenge.

Twelfth Precinct.—A fish-woman in the Rue Dumesnil struck her janitress several serious blows on the head with a heavy candlestick because the latter prevented her from leaving without paying her rent. The culprit has been arrested.

Thirteenth Precinct.—On the Boulevard de l'Hopital a wagoner arrested on the complaints of bystanders for cruelly beating his horses. On the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, two "lovers" arrested for fighting over a rag-picker fifteen years of age. One of them bit off the other's nose.

Fourteenth Precinct.—A young woman dead on the Rue Daguerre of uterine hemorrhage—supposed to be a case of abortion.



"MANILLA."

Fifteenth Precinct.—A corpse found at the Bridge of Penelle—in the water over a month.

Sixteenth Precinct.—Two safes broken open in the store of C. D. & Co., on the Rue de la Pompe, containing a large amount in stock certificates and bank notes.

Seventeenth Precinct.—Three midnight affrays on the Boulevard Pereire. Revolver shots exchanged. No arrests.

Eighteenth Precinct.—Insignificant fire in a feed store on the Rue Marcadet.

Nineteenth Precinct.—Desperate fight with knives between Italian, German and French laborers on the Rue de Puebla. Two wounded at the hospital. Full report will be made later.

"I suppose the Foreign Office will have to take notice of this as an international affair."

Twentieth Precinct.—Burglary in a liquor saloon on the Rue Meulmontant. The burglars, who have so far escaped arrest, carried off twenty-five boxes of cigars and several bottles of liquor.

"You see," observed the Chief of Municipal Police, "it has been quite a light night for us."

"I don't agree with you," replied the Prefect. "In my judgment there were more than enough crimes of every nature—burglaries, affrays, riots, attempted murders, suicides and other offences. This sort of thing must be stopped, and we must prove that the Municipal Police is equal to its responsibilities."

"We do the best we can."

"Again I don't agree with you. Take the case of the two burglaries. What were the police of the Nineteenth Precinct doing that they let them occur?"

"The officers of the Nineteenth were engaged in another serious business, which is not mentioned in the general reports. I will explain to you shortly—"

"In any event I want to be kept informed of every detail of those two burglaries."

"I will keep you posted, sir."

"How many arrests have been made since this time yesterday?"

"During the last twenty-four hours one hundred and thirty-six persons have been locked up at headquarters—a little more than the daily average, which is one hundred and twenty. Of these one hundred and thirty-six arrests, fourteen were of prostitutes—registered and otherwise. Two persons were taken into custody for insanity, and three lost children were taken charge of."

"Have you any special reports?"

"Yes; I have two which merit your special attention. The first is the case of a young woman who was brought to the police station of the Place Saint-Sulpice by a former nurse, charged with being dressed in male attire."

"This isn't Carnival week—so the act ranks as a misdemeanor."

"Not in this particular instance. Mlle. Ida V—, the young person in question, obtained a permit from your predecessor to wear male apparel."

"A permit! On what grounds?"

"She has a decided blonde beard which makes her look like a young man. Moreover, she has the air and walk of a youth. Apart from these peculiarities, she is quite respectable and lives with her parents, who are house owners on the Rue Saint Dominique. She made application for the permit on the ground that she was exposed to indecent remarks and even ill-treatment when she went abroad in the garb of her own sex."

"Was she held at the police station?"

"No. She was released on showing her permit."

"Why did the former nurse prefer the complaint against her?"

"Malice seems to have been the motive."

"The ordinance of Prefect Dubois, dated November 7, 1890, which permits, in certain cases, the wearing of the attire of one sex by a member of the other, prescribes that the person who carries such a permit shall not present himself or herself in such attire at any ball, theatre or other place of public resort. Do you know if Mlle. V. complies with the prescription?"

"She only goes to church. But it seems to me that a church is a place of public resort. If it be so decided, she must, of course, surrender her permit."

The Prefect put his head on one side.

"In matters of conscience I approve of the utmost liberality, and going to church is a religious act which ought to be fully honored and protected. On that ground I decide that Mlle. V.'s permit shall not be withdrawn. What is the other special case?"

"It is that of a kept woman, who calls herself Manilla, and who resides in a sumptuous apartment on the Avenue d'Eylan. At 2 o'clock A. M.—the precise hour of the burglaries which you commented on—officers, while passing the residence of this woman, heard loud

outeries, made in a female voice, and two pistol shots, followed by the crash of broken glass. They tried, without success, to enter the apartment, and one of them ran to notify his superior and the Commissary of Police, while the other remained at the door of the house, at which was a carriage and pair of horses. The officer could make nothing out of the driver, who was a German. In a few minutes the door opened wide enough to permit the exit of two young men, one of whom was very pale and leaned upon the other. Both of them got into the carriage, which dashed off in the direction of the Arc de Triomphe, escaping in spite of the officer. The next moment a body of police and a Commissary arrived on the scene, and succeeded in getting admission to the apartment. In reply to questions, the woman Manilla and her servants told the following story:

"A Brazilian and a Mexican had met in the apartment, and were playing red-and-black. In the course of the game a dispute arose between them, which ended in each throwing his cards in the other's face. Both of them were lovers of the woman Manilla, and the quarrel over cards was, of course, a mere pretext. The Brazilian made a dash at the Mexican with a dagger, which the latter barely escaped by ducking his head. Then the Mexican drew a revolver and fired twice. The first bullet went through a Venetian mirror, and the second lodged in the left shoulder of the Brazilian."

"Was it a serious wound?"

"The Commissary of Police could not ascertain, for the two men are reconciled and refuse to talk about the affair. The Brazilian is under twenty-one years of age, and I have had him under observation for some time, at the urgent request of his mother, who is an immensely wealthy woman and has made every effort to get him to cut loose from the influence of the woman Manilla. He threatens either to marry her or to blow his brains out."

"Do you know much about the woman?"

"I have been informed that she keeps an album full of the portraits of her admirers, in which she keeps a record of all the money and jewelry she gets out of them. Most of them are foreigners—but I am further informed that she has an occasional visitor in the person of a very distinguished French public official."

"You have been correctly informed, then," said the Prefect: "and, moreover, his portrait is to be found in her album with the others."

The Chief of Municipal Police bit his lip.

"You are evidently better posted than I am."

"More than that," continued the Prefect, "at the last reception of the Minister of Foreign Affairs you shook the hand of this statesman in my presence."

The Chief of Municipal Police could scarcely refrain from an exclamation. The statesman referred to was the last person in the world he suspected.

"Have you anything else for me?"

"Yes—these four anonymous circulars—which are of a very revolutionary character."

The Prefect unfolded one of the circulars. It was an ordinary sheet of paper, black, with the printed matter in red ink. At the foot, instead of a signature, was a design representing a human skull surmounted by a dagger.

"It is an appeal to unemployed workingmen," said the chief, "and declares war to the knife against the middle classes. They were found posted last night in the Eleventh Precinct. On several occasions similar circulars, only executed by hand, have been found in the same precinct. It looks like an attempt to inflame workingmen against their employers. I have assigned

special men to the work of detecting the persons who post these circulars."

The Prefect smiled sardonically.

"Take care the special men don't trace these circulars too closely."

"Why?" queried the chief sharply.

"Well, you know, when a theatrical manager finds business growing bad, he is apt to revive an old piece which is pretty sure to draw well for a week or two."

"Then you evidently don't believe in any such conspiracy."

"I'll believe in it—the moment you arrest anybody caught in the act of posting these circulars. And even then I might be inclined to suspect the culprit was some poor devil into whose hands somebody had slipped twenty cents and a paste brush, with a batch of these bills."

"Don't you think you're pushing your incredulity a little too far?"

"That's my conviction," replied the Prefect firmly.

"In examining the pigeon-holes in which these so-called seditious circulars are filed away, and comparing them with the reports of the police agents on the subject, I couldn't help being struck by their strong family resemblance."

Before the disgusted chief could reply to his superior's sarcasm, the doorkeepers announced a second visit from the Chief of the Second Division.

"Tell him to come in."

"The warden at headquarters," said the chief, "has informed me that he has in his custody a party arrested on suspicion of robbery from the person, who says he knows you and desires to see you at once. He refuses, however, to give his name and address."

"I think," said the Chief of Municipal Police, "that he is one of a gang of pickpockets, three of whom we already collared. None of them would give his name or address. When they are arrested they always pretend that they have just arrived in Paris and have no baggage. Their 'pals' take the hint when they don't show up at night and make an immediate bolt of it. The three were arrested separately—one at the stores of the Bon Marche, another at the Louvre and the third at the Printemps."

"The man I speak of was arrested at the Printemps."

"Then you may be sure he was one of that gang."

The doorkeeper, at this point, made a reappearance and handed the Prefect a letter.

"The female who brought this says it is most urgent."

"Tell her to come in."

As the other officers were about to retire the Prefect, who had hastily run through the letter, exclaimed:

"Wait a moment, gentlemen. I shall, in all probability, need to profit by your advice and experience. The lady who has brought this letter is Madame X—, whose husband is an officer of the Legion of Honor and a prominent government official. He has been missing since yesterday."

Madame X— entered, weeping bitterly, and dropped into an easy chair.

"Calm yourself, my good lady," said the Prefect, courteously. "We shall soon find your husband for you. Don't imagine for a moment that anything serious has happened to him."

The poor woman sobbed as if her heart would break.

"He was always so precise—so exact in everything he ever did. And he did not have a single bad habit. No! He had enemies who were jealous of him, and he has been murdered!"

"What makes you think so?"

"He has received two or three letters sneering at his

republicanism. My good husband! He is dead! I've had a presentiment of it—"

"Did he go yesterday to his office?"

"Yes. I ascertained that this morning without letting them know that he had not been home all night."

"Was he in good health?"

"During the last three months he has complained a good deal of vertigo."

"Kindly let us have a full description of him, if you please."

"He is about 50 years of age, middling stout. His hair is cut short, and is brown, sprinkled with gray. So is his beard, which he wears full. He wore a black suit and a high hat. His linen is marked with his initials. Here, too, is the best photograph taken of him. It's an excellent likeness."

"My secretary will conduct you to a waiting-room, in which I hope news of your husband will find you in less than an hour."

After assuring himself that his fair visitor was out of earshot, the Prefect signed an order which was immediately served on the Chief of Detectives, demanding the presence of the unknown man suspected of being a pickpocket.

In a very few minutes the Chief of Detectives was ushered in, with his prisoner.

The Prefect was stupefied—and very naturally. In the downcast culprit he immediately recognized the missing Monsieur X.

An embarrassing silence prevailed for a few minutes.

The Prefect broke it.

"So this is you, is it?"

The prisoner put his handkerchief to his eyes. "I am sorry to say it. I must protest against the way I have been treated."

"How?"

"Your men have handled me as roughly as if I were a professional thief."

"I don't wonder—considering that, according to your own statement, the pocketbook found upon you was not your property. And when to that is added the fact that you had three handkerchiefs, each marked with different initials, which you also confessed were not yours, I am not surprised that they collared you as a professional."

"The pocketbook and the handkerchief were either thrust into my overcoat pocket by real thieves who wanted to escape pursuit, or they were placed there by some blackmailer."

"How is it you did not make that statement or something like it to the Commissary of Police?"

"Because I was afraid of being laughed at."

"Please explain what you were doing so far away from your department office as the Printemps stores?"

"I was in search of a certain toilet article which my wife had been eager to have for a long time, and which I wanted to surprise her with."

"You had nothing on your person to identify you—not even a visiting card."

"I never carry one?"

"How was it you were not wearing your Legion of Honor ribbon?"

"I forgot, when I changed my clothes in the morning, to transfer the rosette."

The Prefect was studious for awhile. Then he turned to the Chief of Detectives, who had been listening with a face of stolid immobility.

"Will you vouch for your men?"

"I will; as much as I would for myself. They are incapable of making a mistake, and they know that the penalty of a false arrest is their instant dismissal. They never take a pickpocket into custody until they

have watched him patiently and got him dead to rights. In this instance, the articles were found on the man's person."

"But he says, very plausibly, that they could have been put in his pocket by somebody else."

"That is absurd—and I'll prove it to you. I did not interrupt him while he was speaking, because I wanted to give him all the rope he wanted to hang himself with. He says his is a case of mistaken identity, and that he was in search of a toilet article for his wife. Well, it must be a very rare and a very expensive article, seeing that at a regular hour for a certain number of days every week for no less than three months he has been a regular visitor at the Printemps stores. Perhaps he was waiting for the end of the season to get it at a reduction."

M. X— turned ghastly pale. A trembling of the lips betrayed his intense nervous agitation.

"Go on," said the Prefect, dryly.

"The man can't deny that he has been in the habit, for three months, of frequenting certain stores patronized by ladies—especially those where the customers are young and pretty. In his admiration for beauty he gets a little rash—and determines to satisfy himself that the charms so profuse around him are genuine flesh and blood. In his—well, scientific—researches his hands are apt to trip themselves up once in a while in a pocket with a purse inside it."

"No! No! I am no pickpocket," exclaimed M. X—, who from being pale had changed to purple.

"Ah! I comprehend!" said the Prefect, frowning darkly. Then turning to the craven prisoner:

"You are not a pickpocket—but you are something a good deal viler and more contemptible. I think we understand each other perfectly."

Monsieur X. understood only too well. He hung his head and kept silence.

The Prefect went on:

"Your wife has applied to me for assistance in finding you. She is in one of our office waiting-rooms. My secretary will take you to her. Explain to her as you please your absence from home. I would not, if I were you, be too frank, however. I will assume the responsibility of discharging you as a case of false arrest. You can go."

Crimson with chagrin and covered with shame, the government official followed the private secretary out of the office.

"Hereafter," said the Prefect to the Chief of Detectives, when they were alone, "caution your men against arresting erotic cranks of the public position of M. X—. Such arrests only give rise to scandal."

"It is often very difficult," said the Chief of Detectives, "to tell the difference between a pickpocket and one of these 'fealers.' In time, men like M. X— become real pickpockets. They take to stealing handkerchiefs and other souvenirs of the women they pursue. Often they seize a handkerchief which contains a pocket-book or a roll of money. Like pickpockets, the erotic cranks hang around the large dry goods stores and crowd against the women. It is quite natural, therefore, for my men to confound them with the professional pickpockets, like whom they act precisely. There is, however, one marked difference between these fellows and pickpockets. The pickpocket is almost always accompanied by one or two pals. The erotic crank, on the other hand, always goes alone. If M. X— had disclosed his real name at the station house, I should have released him at once and notified you immediately."

"I am not sorry he passed a night in the cells," said the Prefect. "It may cure him."



GARROTING THEIR VICTIM.



"Never. I'll guarantee that if I put my men on him it wouldn't be a month before he was collared again. I could tell you of a dozen instances of creatures like him who, after being arrested several times, and realizing that detectives were after them, have had the audacity to summon a uniformed officer and give the detectives into custody as thieves and blackmailers. No! There is no cure for such animals."

The Chief of Detectives had scarcely taken his leave before the private secretary returned with a smile on his face.

"I have never seen anything so absurd as the meeting of M. X— with his wife, under the circumstances. She was as overjoyed as he was cast down, and no praise was too enthusiastic to bestow on the police. They went out arm-in-arm."

* * * * *

Just as the Prefect was leaving his office to go to lunch he received the following report:

MUNICIPAL POLICE,
DEPARTMENT OF INQUIRIES, }
PARIS, ———, ———. }

REPORT.

CASE OF M. X— (with photograph).

I have succeeded in accomplishing the task I assumed an hour ago.

M. X— died last night, of cerebral apoplexy, in a registered house of ill fame. As there were no papers on his person, the Commissary of Police sent the body to the morgue, marked "Unknown."

I return the photograph supplied by Madame X—
Officer — (illegible signature).

Under a large "Approved," written on the margin of the report, the Chief of the Municipal Police had added the following:

"Shall we notify the widow?"

The Prefect added this endorsement:

Unnecessary. M. X— must have had a double. He is alive and in good health. Twenty minutes ago he quitted my office arm-in-arm with his wife.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIVES OF PARIS.

"Let us enter."

So speaks the Chief of Detectives to the Prefect of Police, who is accompanied by his nephew, who is, also, his secretary. They were standing outside "The Red House" (*Le Chateau Rouge*), an edifice which, once the palace of a king's mistress, is now one of the vilest resorts of the French capital.

In the large apartment which they entered was a bar, but no chairs or seats of any kind. The frequenters of the place are too restless to care about remaining in any one position for any length of time. Another feature of the den was its gloom.

Nothing eatable is sold on the premises, but the waiters are always ready to accommodate customers who bring their meals with the loan of cracked plates, bent forks and knives whose points have been carefully broken off. This latter precaution is taken to avoid the consequences of a free fight, in which the participants often carve what they call "flesh-and-blood button-holes" out of their adversaries.

The place is run by an agent or general manager, the proprietor only dropping in for the day's receipts, which are always considerable.

It is one of the privileges of this den that the man who gets drunk in it may relieve his stomach of its contents whenever and wherever he pleases in the saloon. It is easy to detect, by several senses, that wine is the prevailing beverage. On an average in good times as many as a hundred casks a month have been sold. Trade is dull now-a-days, and a cask every twenty-four hours is the height of business.

It is another of the privileges of the place that everybody pays strictly in advance. Orders for drinks are not filled until the money has been "put up" in every

instance. "Give and take." This golden rule prevents differences of opinion.

"How do they sell their wine?"

"From 60 to 80 centimes [30 to 40 cents] a litre [some thing more than a quart]."

Just as the Bohemians of literature and art have selected the beer saloons presided over by barmaids for their resorts, so has The Red House become the rendezvous of what may be called "Tough-dom." It is the refuge of some hundred 'crooks' whose professions even the police are unable to classify or define.

"Although the crowd is pretty thick, it seems to be peaceable enough."

"Oh, rows are frequent. We have dropped in, however, during a calm. Let us take a few notes."

"I fancy I can detect under their rags, in some of these people, quite an air of distinction."

"You are quite right. Some of them are well educated. Others have wasted fortunes in drink and gambling."

"What will you have, gentlemen?" inquired the waiter.

"Nothing at all," replied the young secretary.

"Nothing; eh? Well, that's easily got," replied the waiter with sullen familiarity.

"Bring us some brandied cherries," interposed the Chief of Detectives, remarking, as the waiter vanished, "It's a good deal safer to order something and thus avoid being noticed. Luckily we are not obliged to swallow what we order."

The waiter brought the cherries, but held them aloof from the table.

"Give him forty-five centimes," said the Chief of Detectives.

"I forgot," said the young secretary. "that a fellow pays in advance here."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before a dispute commenced at a neighboring table.

The secretary eagerly approached the disputants. He found two disguised detectives, known as Humming-bird and Porthos, at table with a pair of drunkards. To ingratiate themselves with their neighbors, the detectives had treated all hands, and in return were regaled by the drunkards with full particulars of their transportation to Cayenne after the Commune.

The man swore that when it was noon in Paris, it was midnight in Cayenne.

The woman furiously averred that when it was midnight in Paris it was 6 o'clock in the morning at Cayenne.

This difference of opinion would have led to a general row if the detectives had not persuaded both of the disputants that each was in the right.

"Do you see that fellow at the third right-hand table, reading a letter to a drunken woman? He is an ex-lawyer's clerk who has gone to the dogs through strong drink. He hangs round pot-houses and, for a drink, writes begging letters and bogus letters of reference for customers. Every time he is arrested for being drunk his pockets are full of well-written notes, addressed to prominent people, recommending meritorious cases of necessity to their notice. The next table is occupied by two prostitutes smoking cigarettes, and a couple of sneaking blackguards who secretly sell obscene pictures and transparent cards on the boulevards. Still further on are a lot of the 'barkers' or hawkers, who sell newspapers and pamphlets with loud cries of 'Last night's murder!' or 'Frightful scandal—full and minute particulars!' Mixed in with them are street singers, street musicians and other bohemians of the lowest class."

"Hooray for the deputy!" bawled a number of voices.

"What do they mean?" inquired the Prefect. "Are there any members of the National Legislature here?"

"The 'deputy' is a returned convict from Noumea. Watch him, now that he has taken his seat."

The new-comer cleared his throat and shouted:

"Fellow citizens! There are strangers among us! Let us bid them welcome. We are all brothers here. Let us drink the wine of good fellowship and fraternity, citizens. Waiter! Two quarts and glasses. I am a returned exile, strangers. I had the honor, once upon a time, to know Rochefort and take him by the hand. Here's to him!"

"That chap doesn't seem to pay in advance," whispered the young secretary.

"No; he is drinking at our expense. We'll have to make that good. And if we stay here any longer, he'll put us to even more expense."

"He's a pretty jovial sort of a convict from Noumea, isn't he?"

"That's only a gag. He never set his foot there in his life. It's a good gag to play on the 'crooks,' that's all."

Just at this moment a man entered with a guitar.

"Let's get out of this," remarked the Chief of Detectives, after paying for the last round. "They have got on to us and in another minute we shall be swamped by an invasion of 'fakirs' all ready for a drink at our expense."

So, to the ill-concealed disappointment of the gentleman with the guitar, they left The Red House.

At a sign from his chief, Porthos put himself at the head of the little procession and the other detective, Humming-bird, was about to bring up the rear, when

a drunkard grabbed him by the arm.

"S'shay!" stuttered this person, "Isn't it all right, eh! You look to me as if you wash a little queer, eh?"

"Oh, we're all right," laughed Humming-bird.

At the entrance to the Rue de Trois Portes, the young secretary made a sudden move. "Here's a poor, ragged woman lying stretched out on the sidewalk. She looks as if she might be dead."

"Dead drunk," responded the Chief of Detectives, cynically. "Even animal life seems suspended. Do you detect a very loathsome smell? It is a combination of all the drinks and perfumes popular among women of her kind. She is still young—hardly thirty years old." Between her thick lips gleamed fine white teeth. She must have been pretty at one time.

"How disgusting she looks, all plastered over with mud."

"She is what they call a 'sidewalker.'"

"What's that?"

"It is the slang name for a class of prostitutes whose only home is the scaffolding round some old house that is being pulled down, or some new one that is being built. They carry on their trade in the open air under bridges, in the trenches of the fortifications, in back alleys, where there are no janitors. Once a week, regularly, this one fetches up in the station-house. She comes lawfully by her drunkenness. Her mother died in hospital of delirium tremens. Her father committed suicide while drunk. She herself has almost got to the end of her rope. Some day, coming out of a pot-house, she'll drop dead in the street, and then she'll be on show, for the last time, at the Morgue. Although known to thousands, nobody will claim her body, and she will be turned over to the medical school for dissection."

"What was her parents' business?"

"Her mother's trade could not be classified. Her father was a perambulating 'fence,' who used to peddle stolen goods from door to door."

By this time they had arrived at the Red Flag, a gin-mill much patronized by rag-pickers and fellows who gather up the butts of cigars and cigarettes.

The tourists entered a long, narrow den full of human beings seated at tables, on which were displayed the strong-smelling results of their industry. The "boss" butt hunter was examining the crop and laying out the routes for the next day. In a note-book he kept a memoranda of events about to come off to which a crowd would be most likely attracted, such as rich marriages, important funerals, church festivals, etc.—all of them requiring by usage or law the casting away of a cigar or a cigarette by the smoker attending them. The time and hours of work at this trade vary, according to the place, and the lowest receipts of any butt-hunter never falls below two francs (forty cents).

The proceeds of the day's work are spread out on a long board and sold, both at wholesale and retail.

The popular beverage, here, seemed to be coffee, sold at 10 centimes (5 cents) a cup, which was much enjoyed by the butt hunters in an atmosphere so dense and pungent that the visitors could scarcely breathe.

Leading out of the barroom was a filthy apartment, covered with straw, that was apparently but seldom renewed, on which reclined a number of men, separated from each other by ropes, just like horses in stalls.

"Let us get out of this, for heaven's sake," protested the young secretary. "My eyes smart as if they had been rubbed with onions and red pepper."

The fetid air of the street seemed actually refreshing after the stench and suffocation of "The Red Flag."



A YOUNG THIEF.

"And now," observed the Chief of Detectives, "we are in the Rue des Anglais."

This narrow alley is a sort of passage for women of the town and their "lovers."

"That little shed you see there," continued the Chief of Detectives, "is a sort of refuge for the male and female drunkards who hang around here. The officers on post here make regular raids on it every night, and capture any number of strumpets who have laid down there to sleep off their potations."

"How do you explain the fact that this alley is such a favorite resort of drunkards?" inquired the Prefect. "Why are there more here than elsewhere?"

"They all come from the bucket-shop right in front of us, at No. 4. It is famous among tramps and vagabonds as 'Old Father Spectacles!' It was opened some thirty years ago by a man named Lefevre, who always wore an immense pair of copper goggles. He usually carried them on his forehead, and used to cause his customers a great deal of amusement by incessantly asking his wife what had become of them. It was this old rascal who first ornamented the place with the obscene cartoons which you will see in a moment, and which have been added to from time to time by all his successors."

"The present proprietor of this delectable den only pays 750 francs rent (\$150). His expenses are very small, and he sells an immense quantity of brandy and other alcoholic drinks. Wine is not by any means his leading article, and yet he sells about six or seven barrels every month. The place consists of two long and narrow saloons, separated by a wooden partition. For some reason or another the further one is known as 'The Senate.'"

While the Chief of Detectives was dispensing this information, the door of "Father Spectacles'" establishment was kept busy. Every instant it opened to admit fresh customers, most of whom were much under the weather already.

Standing before it the visitors heard, every time it swung open, a rumbling noise, which at times swelled into a roar like the breakers on a beach.

"Let us enter," said the Chief of Detectives.

The Prefect and his nephew followed.

The first inspiration was a deadly shock to their lungs, so vitiated and so suffocative was the atmosphere of the groggery.

It was a hideous mixture of evaporative alcohol, sour wine and the belchings of overloaded human stomachs, some of which, to poison the air still more, had vomited their contents. This stench of drunkenness was further intensified by the dense fumes of ground up cigar butts, rescued from the gutters and smoked in reeking pipes.

The crowd was so great that the three visitors had to ply their elbows vigorously to get in. After a sharp struggle they forced their way to the door in the wooden partition which separated the two saloons from each other.

Looking dimly through a fog of pungent tobacco smoke, they descried a long zinc-covered bar, behind which were enthroned the proprietor and his wife. Between the bar and the wall the space, narrow and confined, was filled by a villainous mob of wretches, all of them drunk, all of them shouting and yelling, and all of them gesticulating. Behind this hedge of carousing toppers was a long bench fastened to the wall under two or three rows of wine barrels, and on the bench were five or six hideous old hags in rags, which scarcely so much as pretended to conceal their filthy, shrunk and emaciated nakedness. Some were seated nodding their heads with the automatic rhythm and

regularity of intoxication. Others sprawled at full length, dead drunk. All of them were snoring, and one or two of them every moment or two gave out a hoarse and horrible groan.

The further extremity of the bench—which was reserved exclusively for feminine customers—between two of the most villainous-looking beldames, sat a girl with fresh, rosy cheeks, who still retained youth and comeliness, and who was fighting against the drowsiness which was rapidly getting the best of her.

Sitting there, sad-eyed and melancholy, with a pensive, far-away expression in her pretty eyes, she might have been taken for some faithful daughter or sister who sought to rescue a relative from this hell—or, perhaps, even more plausible, some abandoned sweetheart searching for her betrayer.

It was impossible to view without emotion this mere child lost in a crowd of alcoholized brute beasts.

It was a fleeting hallucination, however, for, on approaching her, every respiration that came from between her rosy lips was loaded with the mingled odors of wine, brandy and absinthe.

Her eyes were fixed dreamily on the door.

Was she waiting for anybody?

Yes—she was waiting for everybody. As each newcomer entered she saluted him with a vague smile in hopes of being treated to a fresh "turn" of the yellow liquids which gleamed behind the bar.

If she was spoken to she would try to fix her drunken glance on the speaker. Her lips would attempt a meaning smile, and with a husky voice, so sodden with liquor as to be hardly audible, she would murmur:

"You're v-v-ery good. Buy me a drink of brandy!"

It was not with desire to drum up customers that this streetwalker haunted the den of Father Spectacles. That business she could carry on with more profit elsewhere. Her desire was a mere yearning to get drunk. That accomplished she would drop off to sleep, pillowing her head on the body of another drunkard and snore in absolute oblivion until the hour arrived for closing up the dive.

The saloon at the further end of the place called, as before stated, "The Senate," contained tables almost touching each other, at which customers, male and female, were packed like herrings in a barrel.

They made room, however, for the new comers, and a ghastly smile of welcome went round the unwholesome place.

The uproar was something indescribable. Some were shouting, some were screaming, some were reciting obscene verses. Five or six indecent choruses were being sung at the same time. Language of incredible foulness was roared from one to another, shrieks of drunken laughter and the crash of broken glass were incessant.

To overhear one's neighbor, one had to bend his ear right to his mouth. The solitary waiter, sweating like a runaway horse, was in evil humor. Woe to the man who stood in his way. A thrust with the shoulder or a dig with the elbow would send him staggering against the wall, often to drop with a thud on the stomach of one of the snoring haridons on the bench.

Everything was paid for in advance, and all drinks cost 15 centimes (7½ cents).

The decorations of this dive are its most remarkable characteristic—for the paintings on the walls, which were singularly well executed, were filthy and obscene beyond description. Human beings, male and female, were represented, life size, engaged in performances and operations which are never mentioned even among savages.

Rows are frequent in "The Senate," but they are

treated as mere family quarrels, and the police seldom interfere. If the outbreak assumes a formidable character, the waiter, who is a stalwart and desperate young fellow, "bounces" the combatants into the alley, where a ring obligingly forms, and the dispute is fought out until the disputants are either exhausted or reconciled, upon which they return to the dive and go to drinking again.

As in *The Red House*, it was necessary to call for drinks at *Father Spectacles*. The Chief of Detectives ordered a round of cherry brandy. Seated by the young secretary was a toothless beldame, who looked with covetous eyes on the contents of his glass.

"Aren't you going to treat?" she inquired, with a hideous grin.

"If you want this you are welcome to it," said the young secretary.

"Bah!" she exclaimed; "I never touch sweets. Call for a big glass of white brandy."

The waiter brought a tumbler full of highwine, which she emptied at a single gulp.

"There," she growled; "that's what I want every time. Extract of vitriol's mother's milk compared with it. It stings all the way down."

At this point a man with a violin made his appearance and began to tune up. At the first squeak of his instrument loud cries uprose.

"Shut up!" roared a voice from the end of the saloon.

"Stow your old fiddle," bawled a second.

"We don't want any of your gut-scraping?" yelled a third.

The waiter struck one of the tables a blow which set all the glasses jingling.

"Silence!" he bellowed—and silence followed.

The fiddler ran his bow over the strings and commenced a ballad of which he said he had written both the words and the music.

He began:

"Softer and whiter than ermine!"

"There's no vermin here!" yelled a drunken rough, "Put him out!" howled another.

"Softer and whiter than ermine——"

"To h—I with your d—d vermin," shouted the first voice.

"Gentlemen, give a poor devil some show!" protested the musician. "I've got to raise the price of my night's lodging."

"Take this for your night's lodging!"—and a heavy tumbler whizzed past the fiddler's head and smashed to pieces on the wall. One fragment, rebounding, shivered a pane of glass in the door of the wooden partition.

The drunken mob rose to its feet like one man. Each grabbed a glass or a bottle. The waiter rushed forward to seize the offender, but he clutched tight hold of his table and could not be moved.

In a minute there were two excited, yelling, shrieking, frantic factions, one siding with the waiter, the other with the fellow who had hurled the tumbler.

"Bounce him!" cried one crowd.

"Let him alone!" shouted the other.

In the hurricane of uproar which followed, the three visitors, not without great difficulty, elbowed their way into the open air and safety.

"The proprietors of these dens," observed the Chief of Detectives, "enjoy excellent reputations and are abundantly well fixed. They get rich in trafficking in the vices and passions of humanity. One of them has just purchased a magnificent furnished apartment house in the Rue St. Denis. Another has a splendid country seat. A third takes a regular European tour every summer. When they retire from trade they give the cut direct to everybody they used to know and deal with. They will become men of influence, philanthropists, municipal counsellors, or even officers of the civil government. They will preach virtue and give rewards to good children. When they die they will be lamented as public benefactors."

"Where do the drunkards we have seen take their meals?"

"Most of them do without eating regularly. They live on an exclusive diet of alcohol. Whenever they find the pangs of hunger grow intolerable they go to some cheap restaurant, of which there are plenty. One of the most curious is that on the Rue de Broere, near the Place Maubert. It is at the end of a dirty, blind alley, and looks more like a coal cellar than a restaurant. There are fifteen tables in it and it is always crowded.

"Besides the drunkards of the neighborhood, it is patronized by beggars, peddlers, blind men, dog dealers, butt hunters, rag pickers. Thieves and prostitutes are not admitted. From the soup to the dessert, all dishes are five cents, and, incredible as the statement may appear, both the viands and the drinks are sound, abundant and palatable."

CHAPTER III.

"HIGH" AND "LOW" CROOKS.

"Among the reports of the Municipal Police received yesterday in your absence," said the secretary next morning to the Prefect, "is this manuscript sewed together with pink silk. It relates to the woman who calls herself Manilla."

"Read it," said the Prefect.

"The real name of this female is Rosella Fraisen. She is called Manilla because of her habit of smoking cheroots. She was born in Prague, in Bohemia.

"Her mother was of German origin and kept a small shop hard by the Theatre Royal, Berlin. Her father was a leading actor who used to be a great favorite in Russia. She hardly so much as saw her father twice

in her life. Brought up by strangers, she never showed any feelings of affection or regard for her family.

"Well educated, intelligent and always smiling, so as to disclose her two rows of pearly teeth, she was in early youth quite a celebrated beauty.

"In person, she is tall and well built, though apparently slender, and has very agreeable and fascinating manners. One of her peculiarities is the enormous quantity of silky brown hair which covers her head. Her eyes, which are hazel, are very bright and expressive, and her voice is sweet and musical.

"To all appearances she is full of gayety and quite childish in her ways, although she conceals a tigerish

disposition under a very charming exterior.

"Taking to a life of prostitution at eighteen, at thirty years of age she still preserves enough of her beauty and fascination to turn the heads of men old enough and experienced enough to be on their guard.

"Her admirers can be divided into two classes—those who are blindly devoted to her and with whom she does what she pleases, and regular rounders who "work" her for money.

"After throwing away two fortunes in cards, she suddenly took it into her head to go upon the stage and appeared in a burlesque at the Vaudeville, when she made a hit by her shape alone.

"A rich German banker who used to be on very intimate terms with her mother, took her off the stage and made her register a vow never to appear again behind the footlights. She has faithfully kept her word and never since reappeared in public.

"She lives at a tremendous rate and spends money recklessly. At the present moment she is immensely rich. Recently a Russian prince gave her a diamond necklace worth three hundred thousand francs (\$60,000).

"Her carriage, which is drawn by two superb black horses, is one of the most remarkable in Paris, and she rides down the Bois de Boulogne as if she were an empress.

"Her apartments are simply superb. Such a collection of rugs and tapestries and bric-a-brac doesn't exist elsewhere in the city.

"Her private boudoir is lined with padded pink silk and heavily perfumed. The hangings are of black velvet, embroidered in gold and silver with tropical plants and flowers and birds of gorgeous plumage. The curtains are of the same material, looped up with chains of solid silver.

"The boudoir is always in a sort of dim twilight, which at nightfall is faintly illuminated by a small silver watch-lamp. But at a moment's notice this twilight is dispersed by the rays of a magic lantern which shines through a panel of ground glass. A negress manages the lantern, which in an instant pours a constantly changing flood of light and color into the room. Pure white, pale yellow, green, blue, pink and blood red are the various tints which rapidly succeed each other.

"There is only one picture in the boudoir—a portrait of Manilla, painted by a daring young artist of the most realistic school. It was rejected by the Salon on account of its wonderful naturalism.

"The negress who manipulates the lantern is a magnificent specimen of her race. Her head is simply hideous, with its thick, woolly covering. Her nose is broad and thick; her lips swollen and bleached; her teeth protruding and flat. Manilla found her on a recent trip to the United States, and persuaded her to accompany her to Paris.

"She wears moccasins of snakeskin, and her only garment is a waistband of black silk, with a heavy gold fringe, which is knotted at her hips and ends just at the knees. She has never been known to utter a word to any of her mistress's visitors.

"It is one of the whims of Manilla that on her black satin garters she wears, worked in diamonds, the date of the month and the name of the day of the week.

"For each one of her numerous lovers she scents herself with a special perfume, and is even suspected of drenching her garments with a mysterious fluid which has a strange influence on all who come within range of it.

"Among her favored admirers is a young American who calls himself Antonio. (Note—This Antonio was

Antonio Terry, the rich young Cuban who died recently and left a fortune to his English wife.—Editor). This young man, who is not twenty years old, has on several occasions urged Manilla to go to England with him and get married. Luckily for him, she refuses marriage, and prefers her present condition of personal liberty."

"So far so good—and a very pretty little romance it is," observed the Chief of Detectives when the Prefect's secretary had finished his reading. "But now for the facts: Manilla is a married woman who is separated from her husband. At Berlin she was the cause of a duel, which was afterward followed by a suicide, on account of which the German police gave her orders to quit the country.

"She took refuge in Russia, where she was in due time hunted out by the authorities.

"She next turned up in London and made a sensation in Hyde Park, through which she used to parade herself in a black carriage drawn by a magnificent pair of white horses, the manes, tails and hoofs of which were stained red. Her residence in Paris has not been a long one—but it has been quite long enough to enable her to do a great deal of mischief.

"Mark her," said the Prefect shortly, "for an immediate warning to leave the country. And now for your promised lecture on pickpockets."

"Professional pickpockets," said the Chief of Detectives, "are carefully educated in their early youth. After a series of theoretical lessons they are promoted, when sufficiently advanced, to practice on a dummy figure, which is dressed in men's clothes and covered with sleigh-bells. It is hung from the ceiling by a wire in such a manner that the smallest contact with it sets the bells ringing furiously.

"As soon as a youngster can snatch a purse or a pocketbook from the person of the dummy without making the bells ring, he is pronounced fit to go out and 'work' the crowds on the streets.

"The most severe test of the young thief's skill is to require that he shall 'snatch' a watch chain from the dummy without setting the bells ringing."

"By the way," interrupted the Prefect; "have you got any news of the burglary reported night before last at Passy?"

"Yes, sir; my men have just made an arrest in connection with it."

"Good. Give me the particulars."

"Last night, at the Theatre Folies, Bergeres, a woman of the town, who is known as Gloria and who lives on the Rue Mosnier, was accosted by a well-dressed man with a very forbidding countenance. With an accent half French and half German he inquired of her if she was of easy virtue, and when she replied in the affirmative wanted to know if she was duly registered. The girl again said 'yes,' and he treated her to supper at the Cafe Anglais. On retiring with him afterward, she was astonished to see him fix a bolt on the door, which he closed hermetically. He then took out of his pockets a heavy revolver, a dagger, two or three handfuls of silver coin, a gold watch and a small bottle covered with parchment.

"She asked him what might be the contents of the bottle, and he replied that it was a remedy against epilepsy—a disease from which he suffered greatly—which had been compounded for him by an Austrian physician.

"Before morning I was advised of his presence, and on leaving her house he was arrested by my agents. On searching him we found in his pockets nineteen bank notes of one thousand francs each, and three pocketbooks containing fifty louis apiece (a louis be-

ing equal to five dollars). There were no papers to give any clue to his identity, and neither his clothes, linen or hat had a single mark of any sort whatever.

"His dagger was in a leathern sheath and his revolver was of American manufacture, but neither of them had any distinguishing characteristic.

"The revolver must have been recently used, for one of the cartridge shells is empty and the barrel of the firearm is blackened with powder.

"In the crown of his beaver hat, concealed in the lining, was the small phial mentioned by the woman Gloria. It contained, not a remedy against epilepsy, but a small quantity of chloroform."

"He is evidently a prominent and first-class criminal. Has he made any statement?"

"None whatever. Two facts induce me to suspect him of being one of the thieves who first robbed the Lyons bank and then the institution at Passy. One of these facts is that the money found on him corresponds exactly with that stolen at Passy—the other that while supping at the Cafe Anglais he drank a good deal of Maraschino and brandy—just like one of the Lyons gang."

"I suppose you have these fellows catalogued and classified down to a fine point?"

"I have been at a good deal of trouble to arrange the various classes of professional thieves by their slang names.

"For instance there are:

"*Cambrioleurs*—room thieves, from the slang word *cambriole*, a room.

"*Carroubleux*—false-key thieves; from *carrouble*, slang for false key.

"*Fric-Fracs*—door bursters.

"*Fanterniers*—window thieves.

"*Boucarmiers*—shop thieves.

"And a lot of others.

"All thieves are divided into two great sections—'high crooks' and 'low crooks'. High crooks are the finely-trained, fastidious, artistic rascals, who know their business and go about it with system and judgment. Low crooks are the careless, clumsy, hungry scoundrels, who have neither system nor finish. High crooks and low crooks occasionally work in company, but not often. When they do, it is always the high crook who does the scheming and lays out the work, which is executed by the low crook.

"Novices in thieving principally occupy themselves in shop-lifting, which is practiced in several ways. They begin very young and do some excellent work occasionally. One of the favorite 'rackets' of these novices is to snatch money from counters, or goods while they are being displayed.

"As soon as a novice or 'rat,' as he is called, gets the collar, he is sent to la *Petite Roquette*, where he is thrown in with full grown crooks and gets the finishing touches put on his criminal education. He leaves the House of Correction saturated with vice and villainous instruction."

"A good many of the pickpockets arrested every day are foreigners, are they not?"

"Most of them are of foreign extraction. English and Italians are the most numerous."

"Which in your judgment are the most dangerous?"

"Those who give you no clue to their character, and who operate in a noiseless well-trained way. These first-class operators you come across everywhere—at the races, in theatres, churches, on the Stock Exchange, in the clubs—even at official receptions."

"Nonsense!"

"Yes, sir; I have quietly arrested some of the most

daring at receptions—right here in the Prefecture of Police."

"And you never notified the Prefect?"

"What would have been the use? They were such charming gentlemen and such fascinating ladies that nobody would have believed them capable of such a thing."

"I have heard a great deal about a gang of thieves who are said to be called 'the chloroformists.' Does such an organization actually exist?"

"It does. They have a trick, among others, of offering their victims drugged cigars. In some instances death has followed."

"What sort of creatures are these first-class thieves?"

"A great many of them are highly educated and have the most refined and luxurious tastes. That is so much in our favor, for they cannot bear to live out of Paris, and when they make a big haul they invariably come to the capital to spend it. To head them off and keep them under control, I have established a corps of special officers who confine themselves exclusively to hunting down and shadowing professionals. They stick to their trail like bloodhounds, and sometimes pay for their diligence and fidelity with their lives. Officers and crooks employ the same agencies, tricks, devices and disguises. To oppose the constantly increasing host of rogues and vagabonds, most of them highly accomplished and exceptionally intelligent, we need another army of at least equally shrewd and industrious officers.

"During the International Exposition of 1867 two hundred pickpockets were caught in the very act of committing their depredations. It was while arresting these malefactors that the detective police made a very curious and interesting discovery.

"Thirty of the pickpockets were supplied with stop watches, made with independent second hands, all exactly alike in every particular. There were no clues to the name and residence of the manufacturer. On each case was a star, etched with a needle.

"When brought face to face these fellows pretended not to know each other. They were all convicted without any confession being extorted from them, and were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

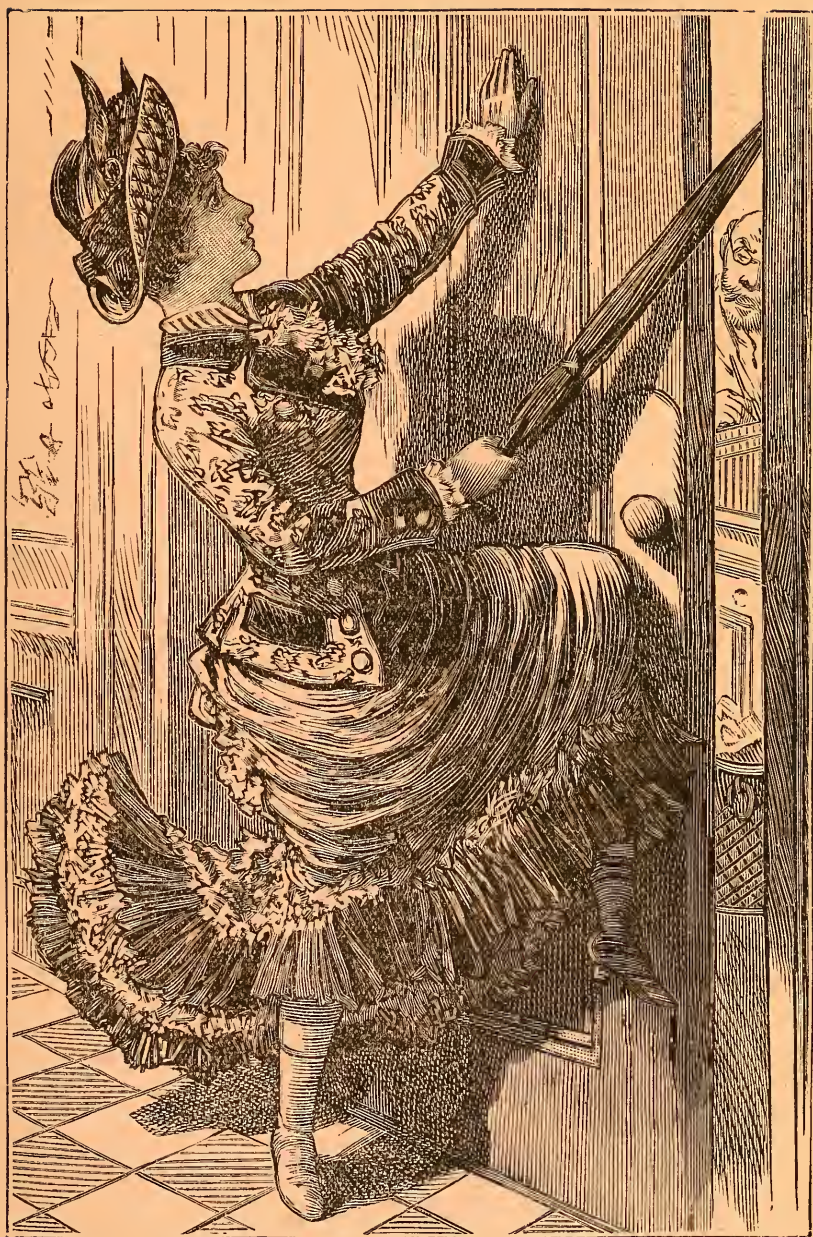
"Carried in the right pocket of each man's vest, the watches served for a badge and tallying mark by means of which these international rogues recognized and identified each other.

"Quite recently I learnt that a rich American, business unknown, who spoke several languages, had ordered for the Exposition of 1867 one hundred watches of exactly this description, costing five hundred francs (\$100) apiece. The thirty we seized on the persons of the thieves we apprehended were, beyond question, some of that lot.

"A member of the gang, as you will perceive, who turned up missing at the designated hour, meant one of them in police custody. The signal for the disappearance of the whole crowd, therefore, was the non-appearance of a single enlisted thief.

"This proves that what we call Pickpocket Masonry dates as far back as 1867. Since then the confederated thieves have turned up on all occasions—on steamboats, on railroads, at parades and processions, and especially on the race tracks. They are always to be found 'working' wherever crowds are gathered together. They are especially busy in mass-meetings where much enthusiasm is displayed.

"The true pickpocket is no ordinary, commonplace, low-born, ill-bred criminal. A good many of them are known elsewhere as people of established position—sometimes even of respectability. Some of them are



SHE GAVE HIM PARTICULAR FITS.

saloon keepers or cigar dealers. Others are jewelers or dealers in the precious metals. All of them have the appearance of honest tradespeople. They only practice their criminal trade during 'business hours.' The rest of the time they enjoy themselves as gentlemen of leisure.

"The English pickpocket is the best known. You run across him everywhere; but that does not imply that he is the most skilful or the most prosperous. He enjoys a reputation, which is a good deal better than he is entitled to. He is stiff and mechanical, and though his hands and fingers are nimble and well trained, he goes too much by rule.

"He is a tireless walker and, in the course of a single day, manages to 'take in' all the crowded parts of Paris. So great is his pedestrianism that he wears out the officers who are shadowing him in hopes of getting him 'dead to rights.' He is, also, remarkable for his caution. He never 'takes chances.' He never stays more than ten minutes in one place, and never goes through two victims in the same crowd. There is an exception to be noted in this general rule in the case of the race-tracks. There he is emboldened by the excitement and general heedlessness, and commits robbery after robbery, often without moving once. He is the only cool man in a sea of wild enthusiasm and uproar.

"His favorite haunt at the races is the paddock in which the jockeys are weighed.

"Dressed in the height of fashion and backed up by skilful accomplices, he works like a dramatic star supported by a well trained and thoroughly rehearsed company. When a rich sportsman approaches a bookmaker's stand with a view to entering a bet, some of the gang get in his way while others hustle him in the rear. Surrounded by a crowd of men who, so he thinks, are bent on betting, like himself, he is shoved and bounced from one to another like a big rubber ball. As soon as he grows giddy and loses his head, the chief operator watches his opportunity and 'snatches' his valuables. The plunder at once flies from hand to hand until it is far beyond all chance of recovery.

"As soon as a haul is made the gang disperses, and its members keep apart for awhile, amusing themselves as best they can. By and by they tackle a fresh victim and go through the performance exactly as before. At the end of the day the 'takings' are compared and added up, in the most business-like way possible to imagine, and each man receives his share.

"These English pickpockets have their signals and their system, just as the police have. They inform each other, under the code, whether business is good or bad, and it is a curious fact that they never give any information or encouragement to operators of another nationality.

"Generally speaking, all Northern-born pickpockets are alike. English, Russian, Poles and Germans are all cold, methodical, audacious and persistent. They scarcely ever let go of a chosen victim until they have cleaned him out.

"The German's specialty is the 'run-in'—a name applied to the act of knocking so violently against a person as to confuse him to a degree enabling the thief to 'snatch' his money or jewelry.

"To carry out his plans, he takes as a partner any kind of pal who may turn up, no matter whether he be English, Italian, Spanish or French. When he works he never bothers his head about the risks he runs, and he does not lose a minute. As soon as he sees a victim putting something valuable in one of his pockets, he sticks to him like a shadow and only quits him when

he has collared all his available property. He seldom hangs around the big shops or the race courses, and operates principally in big banking houses and other financial establishments. There he posts himself to see who receives large sums of cash and where it is placed by the receivers. He snatches the pocketbook the moment he has located it, before the victim, in some instances, has made a dozen steps.

"Another German specialty is the 'lifting' of a cash box while the man in charge of it is distracted by something else. This kind of robbery generally takes place in banks, where large sums of money are to be seen. The thieves begin by becoming thoroughly acquainted with the various locations, entrances and exits. Then they operate with security and confidence.

"Whenever a German is caught 'dead to rights' he calls himself a 'bookmaker.' But he never gives his real name or address. Though he may have been convicted a dozen times, it is only by good luck that we can ever make sure of the fact. It is a safe rule that he is always sentenced under an *alias*.

"It is not from the North alone that we get our pickpockets. Italy and Spain supply us with a good number of 'artists,' who are easily recognized by their black hair and dark complexions.

"Spanish pickpockets deserve a special mention. They are just as pious as they are rascally, and wear all manner of chaplets and relics and scapularies. In fact, they place their trade under the special protection and patronage of the Holy Virgin.

"The moment they are arrested they drop on their knees and invoke the Madonna and all the saints to prove their innocence. No matter how overwhelming the evidence against them, they declare that they are wrongfully convicted and call heaven to witness that they are the victims of mistaken identity or official malice.

"These Spanish thieves go to work much as their English confreres. As soon as rogues of either nationality make a haul they go to the nearest drinking house and imbibe several drinks of brandy to put heart in them, as the phrase goes.

"The Italian pickpocket is easily the best and smartest of all. He knows and thoroughly appreciates his superiority, and sneers at the entire police of Europe. He goes on 'working' the same neighborhood incessantly, without caring a particle for the fact that the officers of the law are on the look out for him. But, in the long run, his audacity ruins him, for he slips up when he least expects it, and the police seize him.

"He is the artist of crime, is the Italian.

"The Frenchman is eclectic. He trains with 'pals' of every other nationality, and he 'works' according to their rules. But in a convention of pickpockets the Italian would be unanimously chosen president. His elegant manners, his sprightliness and his courtesy make him especially dangerous. As soon as he descends a victim, he brushes up against him, very lightly, and then apologizes so gracefully that the victim is too charmed and flattered to realize that he is being robbed.

"From the point of view of dexterity, the Spaniard is the Italian's only rival. He, likewise, operates with ease and subtlety and lightness of hand.

"A pickpocket never wears a glove on his right hand, and, usually, as a cover to his operations, he carries a light overcoat over his left arm. In winter he would attract attention if he carried the overcoat on his left arm, so he replaces it with a big silk neckerchief. At the entrance of a church or theatre he uses his hat as a shield.

"The operation of pocket-picking is a most delicate one. Two fingers only are inserted in the pocket. In

the lightest and daintest manner they seize the pocket-book, which is held suspended for two seconds that the owner may not feel a sudden jar. At the same instant the confederate, who is in the rear, pushes against the victim. The victim turns to see what is the

matter and in a moment his pocketbook has vanished. "When the pocket is deep or closed by a button, the pickpocket is momentarily—only momentarily—re-pulsed. The next instant his whole hand is inserted and the thing is done."

CHAPTER IV.

MORE CURIOUS DETAILS OF THE WAY IN WHICH FRENCH CRIMINALS OPERATE.—AT THEIR WORK.

—THE SCENES FREQUENTLY VISIBLE AT THE RAILROAD STATIONS.

"An experienced officer is not satisfied with arresting the chief operator only. He always tries to collar his 'covers' or pals.

"That is why the 'chief' invariably passes the plunder to the next 'cover,' who passes it to a second, who, in turn, passes it to a third, and so on until it is in safety.

"This makes it easy for the operator, when arrested, to insist upon his innocence, and protest with all the assurance in the world:

"You are mistaken, sir; I haven't got anything of yours. I give you permission to search me."

"Then the 'covers' come forward and testify to the impossibility of the theft having been committed by their 'pal.' If they see that the officer is inexperienced, they talk loudly of seeing that he is heavily fined for his grave mistake. Very often, in such a case, the detective thinks it is possible the victim may be deceived, and lets the pickpocket go.

"This is how they 'work' passengers at railway stations:

"As soon as a victim walks toward the compartment of a car, one of the 'covers,' made up as a tourist, with a valise in his hand and a bag slung over his shoulder, gets in front of him on the top step of the car, so as to give the 'operator' a chance.

"Just behind the victim is another 'cover,' who gives him a shove, as if by accident. This enables the operator to 'lift' the victim's purse unobserved. The moment the trick is done, the 'cover' in front exclaims: 'Oh! this is the wrong train,' and promptly vanishes.

"The performance is as brisk and as rapid as a flash of lightning.

"The actual operator usually takes the train and gets out at the first station. When railroad cars are taken to the repair shops, the workmen always find a certain number of empty purses and pocketbooks which have been concealed by pickpockets.

"Very often two gangs of pickpockets 'work' the same territory without knowing each other. As they thread the crowd the two gangs observe each other, take each other for officers and then make a sudden and rapid disappearance.

"It is often very difficult for an officer to conceal his identity, for an excess of precaution is very apt to put the thieves on their guard.

"When he sees that he is recognized as a police officer, the only thing left him to do is to retire to a distance, without losing sight of the rascals. That gives him a chance to swoop down on them while they are

dividing up their plunder.

"At least two-thirds of the cases of pocketpicking in Paris go unpunished. Thieves are arrested over and over again with plunder on their persons which has evidently been stolen, but no report of which has ever been made to the police. The trouble is that nearly everybody thinks himself or herself much too clever and too alert to be possibly victimized—until the fatal moment arrives. Then the contrary is very apt to be the result of experience.

"For example:

"One of my officers, in search of a gang of money-snatchers, had occasion to be in a broker's office. Just by the door sat a young man who was busily employed in counting gold coins into a big wallet, while he held a wad of bank notes between his teeth.

"As he passed him, my man remarked, 'That's the way to get badly robbed.'

"Just you try it on,' was the young fellow's reply.

"The officer shrugged his shoulders and passed along.

"He had not taken fifty steps before there were loud cries of 'Thieves! Police!'

"The officer ran quickly to the spot, only to be knocked down, jumped upon and seized by the throat. It was the young clerk who thus grappled with him, shouting 'Here is one of the gang!'

"The unfortunate detective had to prove his innocence. In the meantime, the real thief who had snatched the banknotes out of the clerk's mouth, was far and away beyond pursuit.

"About three weeks ago, one of the Judges of the High Court of Paris, leading a child by the hand, pressed up against the steps of an omnibus near the station of the Boulevard des Italiens.

"Hardly had he done so when the officers on duty there saw three men, well-dressed and stylish, each with a light overcoat over his arm. These fellows surrounded the judge, hustled him gently and then quickly withdrew.

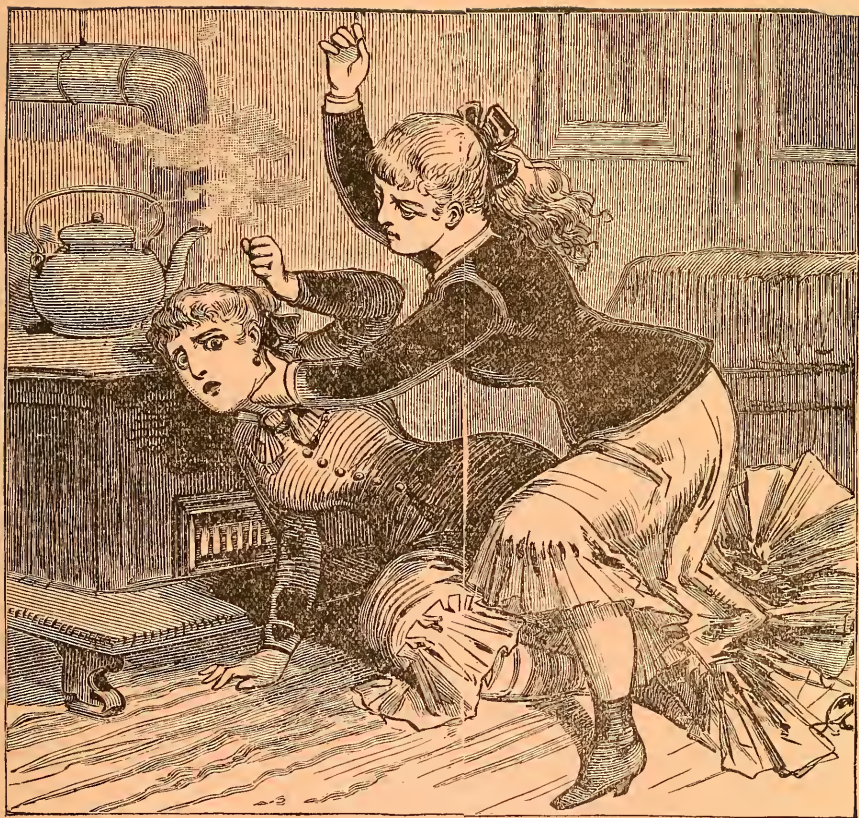
"Convinced that they had just seen a robbery committed, the officers made themselves known to the Judge and asked him if he had missed anything.

"The judge was very indignant at the bare suspicion. However, he consented to examine his pockets.

"'No!' he said, coldly, 'I have lost nothing.'"

"'Is your watch safe?' inquired one of the officers, pointing to his chain, which was hanging from his vest, two-thirds of it having been cut off.

"'You are right,' said the judge, penitently. 'I have been robbed.'



SLUGGED HER SISTER.



"These pickpockets operate everywhere. A fortnight ago at the marriage of a niece of the Minister of the Interior, a well-dressed person stole the pocket-books of at least ten of the guests.

"His capture was due to a mere accident.

"Two officers happened to come up just as he was throwing several articles down the ventilator of a cellar. A pocketbook, striking a bar of iron, rebounded on the sidewalk.

"The thief tried to take flight, but was arrested and lodged in the station house where, on being searched, he disgorged more than 2,000 francs (\$400).

"The cellar, which was an old one and abandoned, was explored by the police who found, among broken lumber and old boxes, no less than 150 empty pocket-books.

"Cases are on record where the pickpocket has actually had the audacity to replace an empty purse in his victim's pocket. In one instance, the rifled pocket-book of a wife was actually returned to her husband.

"Only the other day, Monsieur and Madame B., who reside in the Rue Valois, on the Place du Palais Royal, entered an omnibus running between the city hall and the Maillot gate. They took two empty seats and sat opposite each other.

"They got out at the Champs Elysees and the husband, not having the amount to pay for entrance to the Exposition, asked his wife for it.

"She at once perceived that her purse had vanished, and with it no less than twelve francs. She had last seen it when she took it out on the Rue St. Honore in order to give ten centimes to a little girl who was leading a blind man.

"In the sculpture gallery, Monsieur B., who was sitting down, became aware of the presence of a solid body in the right hand tail pocket of his frock coat. Extracting it, he found it to be his wife's purse, completely emptied, made fast by a rubber band to another which contained in a secret compartment a twenty-franc piece of the period of Louis Philippe.

"Madame B. remembered that in the omnibus a woman sitting on her right, who carried a shawl over her knees had, with a very natural motion, covered her skirts with it in a manner to conceal the working of her hands.

"On arriving at his depot the conductor of the omnibus found behind the cushions two more purses.

"There is another class of crooks known as 'cut purses,' who dress and act differently from the ordinary pickpockets. They are never encountered in shops, or railroad stations. Most usually they wear a long blue ulster, which is a capital substitute for the hat or overcoat. Their 'work' is of a much more difficult character than that of the ordinary pickpocket. It consists in getting possession of the long purse or pocket which every peasant usually carries. Last year, at the pork fair at Champigny, the sum of 950 francs was 'lifted' from a herder and seller of pigs. The victim had placed a handkerchief over the mouth of his money-bag. In the excitement of a quarrel, purposely got up by the thieves, one of them 'lifted' the handkerchief and inserted two fingers to steal the bag. The depth of the pocket, however, made this impossible. So he inserted his thumb, on the outside. This acted externally.

"This movement, tenderly executed—the thumb working outside and the fingers in—prevented the victim from feeling the bag mount up the length of his thigh. Gradually the lining of the pocket is turned inside out, like the finger of a glove. When it arrives at the top, the money bag naturally falls into the hand of the robber.

"Unfortunately for the thief, in this case, the money bag was upside down, and from its mouth there slipped several five franc pieces, which fell upon the floor and attracted the attention of the victim and his neighbors.

"The pickpocket was captured at once, in spite of the assistance of his pals.

"He was a good deal of a character, and was not at all averse to relate episodes of his career.

"One of his stories was quite amusing:

"He saw at a fair a rich countryman, the mayor of his village, reading in the *Petit Journal* the exploits of a gang of pickpockets. The rural magistrate could not understand how anybody could allow himself to be robbed in any such manner. 'It is only necessary,' said the worthy man, 'to take some such simple precaution as I do. I always carry my purse in a double pocket which my housekeeper has fixed between my shirt and my vest. When I have my coat buttoned up over it, it would take a very clever pickpocket to relieve me of my valuables.'

"Thus protected and with his arms folded over his breast as a further precaution, he stalked through the fair, inviting, unconsciously, the attention of all 'crooks' to the fact that he had money on his person.

"This is how he was eventually 'worked':

"A rather long match was dexterously inserted at the back of his neck, between his shirt collar and his skin. It protruded in such a way that in a crowd or jostle, that the match head could be touched off by a lighted cigar or cigarette.

"Then the 'operator' and his 'covers' surrounded him as usual.

"In another instant there was a terrible cry.

"The match had been lit and was blazing behind his neck. His hands flew to the scorched and endangered spot. This at once left the pocketbook unguarded, and gave the thieves a chance to tear his clothes off him on pretence of rescuing him from being burnt up. In another moment the object of their ingenious trick was in their hands and they vanished.

"Pickpockets are most fertile in schemes and tricks. They have the gift of feeling by intuition when there is a good 'game' to play, and when they have resolved on a plan of action they carry it out at all hazards.

"For instance, a contractor of public works drew the sum of 65,000 francs (\$13,000). When he got his money he locked it up in a big bag and handed it to his cousin, who was waiting for him in a cab on the Avenue Victoria.

"'Look out for it,' he said. 'Don't lose sight of it for an instant.'

"'You needn't be afraid,' was the reply. 'I'll keep it under the seat.'

"The contractor went to several offices, on foot, followed by the cab. During the journey the bag was 'lifted.'

"The cousin had remained in the carriage, and the coachman had not quitted his seat.

"The affair looked inexplicable—and yet, it was very simple, so far as the thieves were concerned.

"The moment the cab left the Avenue Victoria, loud and piercing cries were uttered by a well-dressed man who was struggling in the roadway. He had, to all appearances, been knocked down and badly hurt by some omnibus. In reality nothing whatever had happened to him.

"The clever rascals, bent on robbing the contractor, had 'put up the job.' While the incautious cousin was leaning out of the window, inquiring the cause of the commotion, a cunning scoundrel had slipped his hand under the seat and snatched the bag."

"The thief who is an adept in his nefarious profession, and who 'works on the parlor floor,' never goes into the country except with a fine outfit of all the tools necessary for the accomplishment of his criminal purposes. He carries with him the small sharp knife necessary for cutting out a money-bag; a strong, fine pair of steel scissors to 'nip' watch chains, and the instrument used to make the angular incisions in valises.

"This variety of thief always acts with nerve and judgment. His operations are invariably large and he disdains petty crimes, upon which he looks with contempt.

"The lower order of 'crooks,' have their headquarters in dens in the neighborhood of the great markets. They are the lazzaroni of Paris, and are absolutely incapable of honest work of any kind.

"Like their brethren in Naples, they live from day to day on the proceeds either of theft or begging.

"You can see them everywhere. Sleeping on the slopes of the fortifications in summer or on the park benches. Their nourishment is supplied by open-air dealers in cheap soup and other things.

"As soon as one of these dirty, low-lived rogues makes a haul, he gets rid of his tatters, takes a bath to free himself of his vermin, dresses up in second-hand clothing and becomes a hawker of programmes, a ticket speculator, and sometimes, in a small way, a bookmaker on a race track.

"This philosopher among vagabonds is the least intelligent and provident of them all. He is reckless to a degree, and seems, often, to lack ordinary sense.

"Lodging-houses exist for him, of which he makes choice according to his means, which are known as 'The Chamber of Deputies' and 'The Senate,' both of which are located in the neighborhood of the markets.

"As his unconquerable indolence and love of roaming are constantly bringing him up in all sorts of places, he usually finishes up by becoming a mere tool in the hands of the banditti who infest the barriers of Paris, in time developing into a really dangerous criminal.

"It is from among these 'tramps' that the grand army of vice and wickedness unceasingly draws its recruits.

"I assure you that the majority of those who commenced life as hangers-on of the markets fetch up eventually in the courts of justice, become the inmates of the central prisons, or go out as convict colonists to Noumea.

"Now, a word about our female pickpockets. These women have the appearance, dress and manners of the middle class, and their costume is varied to suit the character of the places in which they operate.

"You come across them in railroad stations, boat stations, on the promenades, in the theatres and museums, and, especially, in the great shops. They only operate on members of their own sex.

"Especially active are they in the public omnibuses, which always afford them a very rich harvest.

"On week days the working hours of these women are from one o'clock to seven. On Sundays and holidays they 'operate' all day long.

"The changing from one omnibus to another gives them a splendid chance, for the crowding, jostling passengers are much too busy trying to get the best of each other to think of such a thing as a pickpocket.

"When they travel in pairs, one of them 'snatches' the pocketbook and hands it to the other. If the victim perceives that she has been robbed and grasps the thief, the 'pal' drops the purse dexterously at her feet and, exclaims, 'There's your purse, just where you dropped it.'

"Then while the victim is eagerly recovering her money the two pickpockets vanish.

"Sometimes the suspected one insists on being taken before a commissary of police. On being searched nothing is found on her, and she often insists on being indemnified for her arrest with a heavy sum of money.

"The ample skirts and wraps which female pickpockets wear afford a capital cover for their operations.

"Once in a while these women work in pairs with male accomplices. In these cases the woman 'operates' and the man vanishes with the booty. In case the 'operator' is interrupted and caught 'dead to rights,' the male accomplice comes forward in the capacity of an officer and takes charge of the culprit. He gets the name and address of the victim, notifies her to attend at Police Headquarters, and then when her back is turned lets his prisoner go free.

"The greatest number of female pickpockets come from Germany, but they are by no means the most successful or the most skillful.

"The English women have raised theft almost to the height and dignity of an art. Manœuvring, by preference, with their left hands, they always keep the right gloved.

"Spanish women are easily recognized by their diminutive figures, their dark complexions and their rapid, gliding, insinuating motions. If a police officer approaches, instead of being alarmed, they quickly get him into conversation. They are extraordinarily impudent. One of them said to a police officer, whom she recognized in the stores of the Bon Marche: 'My dear man, you're wasting time here. I'm working; but you'll never catch me.'

"Frenchwomen as pickpockets do not lack address, but they are too eager to realize the results of their operations. They lose no time in examining a purse when they 'lift' one. In that manner they allow themselves very often to be collared while counting up the proceeds of a haul.

"Every day a new trick or 'racket' is invented by the pickpockets of Paris. For instance, at the Market of St. Germain, the other day, a woman, about forty years of age, conventionally dressed, carried a child about twenty months old, whose legs and feet she manipulated so as to get them over the openings to pockets.

"At the right moment she lightly tickled with her left hand the legs of the child, while the right, masked by the same ingenious means, accomplished the usual 'operation.'

"If the victim felt a slight rubbing and turned, the pickpocket would give the baby a slap or two, and say:

"'Look out for your feet. You're dirtying the lady's dress.'

"This, naturally, disarms the victim of all suspicion.

"I heard the other day of another modification of the art of pocketpicking.

"A child, scarcely three feet in height, and not over eight years of age, was arrested in an omnibus for robbery from the person. This precious little jailbird was led around by his brother, a youth of seventeen. Keeping his hands in the pockets of his overcoat, he easily cleaned out his neighbor's, and, if their suspicions were aroused, his innocent, infantile face at once reassured them.

"The pockets of his overcoat were bottomless, so that he had no difficulty in 'operating.'

"The 'lifting' of a watch and chain was, literally, 'child's play' to him, and his average winnings were from eight to ten pocketbooks a day—all the proceeds of which he dutifully turned in to his parents,



AT THEIR MERCY.

"When women pickpockets are arrested they resort to all sorts of dodges and devices. For instance: We had to deal, the other day, with a woman who made her living both by theft and prostitution. She was a very skilful shoplifter, and was caught in the very act of 'working' a store.

"On being released from Saint Lazare, she was put under police surveillance, and two inspectors arrested her on the Boulevard Sebastopol, not a hundred feet from the great stores of Pygmalion, where she had just 'lifted' a parasol, representing a value of twelve dollars.

"She made no resistance, and submitted with a good enough grace to the officers. But when she arrived in the Rue des Lombards, she threw herself on the sidewalk, yelling, 'Help! help! police! police!'

A crowd at once gathered and, without having any idea of the real facts of the case, took the part of the thief against the officers. They were only too delighted to have a chance to show their hatred and contempt of the law.

"The woman profited by this to exclaim: 'I'm an honest married woman, with a family. I haven't stolen a thing. That parasol I swear I paid for. You have no right to arrest me.' Then, turning to the mob, 'These two blackmailers are trying to get some money out of me.'

"The mob shouted: 'Chuck them in the river! Chuck them in the river.'

"The situation was growing critical. A policeman in uniform came along. Instead of taking the woman and her captors to the station house, he insisted on the two inspectors showing their authority and explaining the facts of the case. In the confusion, while they were handling the parasol, the woman managed to escape, and the three officers were left alone to face the triumphant ridicule of the crowd.

"Prisoners of both sexes are always rigorously

searched. The officers minutely examine their hats, their shoes, their undergarments—every fold in their clothes. They make sure that there is no place left in which can be hidden money or weapons.

"It is no uncommon thing to find money in the mouths of criminals. The other day a pickpocket calmly swallowed five pieces of ten francs each.

"One thief had the ingenious notion of sewing twenty-franc pieces inside his flannel under-vest. Another packed bank notes in the lining of his overcoat and under the insoles of his shoes.

"A high hat serves a thief as a safe or a cash box. Inside, under the lining, he hides bank bills. On the outside he conceals, under the band, pieces of five and ten francs, sometimes even of twenty.

"Years ago the secret police used to capture hundreds of pickpockets on all the race courses in and near Paris. In those days they had tickets granting them free access to every part of the track and stands. Nowadays, these free tickets are not distributed where they belong—among the real officers—but are bestowed upon politicians and others. The detectives, instead of being allowed to carry out their own plans and work in their own way, are placed under the command of the police officer in control of carriages.

"This gorgeous gentleman, in his showy uniform, attracts everybody's attention as he marshals his men and assigns them to their respective posts of duty. His principal use for the detectives is to send them in chase of beggars, programme peddlers and other small fry.

"On the pretext of economy the municipal police have arranged for the transportation of officers in the ordinary omnibuses of the General Company, in which the criminals and crooks easily identify them.

"Last year, under these conditions, seventeen heavily-filled pocketbooks were reported stolen in the weighing paddock alone.

CHAPTER V.

SAFE BURGLARIES.

The next scene in M. Mace's graphic work is a description of the trial before a "judge of instruction" of the unknown thief, mentioned in a preceding chapter, who called himself "Lover," and said he was thirty years of age, had been born in Paris and was the son of a very prominent government official.

The "judge of instruction," a purely French magistrate, is one who had been expressly assigned by the State Attorney to investigate the 'gangs' of Paris. He knows their composition, speaks their language fluently, and knows their methods to a dot. He has rare tact in classifying malefactors and other criminals, and is of great assistance to the police in giving them the benefit of his experience.

Here comes a word photograph of the judicial drama:

The prisoner enters between the two officers known as Humming-bird and Porthos. He confronts the judge, who raises his eyes and regards him with a mild but penetrating glance.

"Are you ready to make any statement?"

"Why not? I was with the fellows who broke open the safes."

"How many of you were there?"

"Four."

"Who were your accomplices?"

"I don't know their names."

"What were their nicknames?"

"I don't know."

"Where did you make their acquaintance?"

"On the road."

"You have got a place of meeting?"

"No regular place."

"Don't you desire to speak?"

"Go ahead and see."

"Lover isn't your name."

"It's the nickname given me by my comrades. My family is a respectable one and I don't intend to let them be embarrassed by news of my arrest."

"No doubt you can inform us of the circumstances which preceded, accompanied and followed the robbery?"

"I only know one thing, and that was the part I personally played in the affair. It consisted, principally, in looking after the dog and seeing that he did not disturb us."

"How did you effect that?"

"I gave him a large piece of meat that was a trifle

strong and smelt a little. Dogs always prefer it to fresh meat. In it I inserted the little pill which put him to sleep. It took a long while for the drug to work."

"How long were you there?"

"Almost an hour. We were prepared to find one safe only. The other put out our plans somewhat. We didn't know which contained the valuables."

"So you carried them both off, in spite of their size and weight?"

"They weren't much of a job for four strong men to tackle."

"I suppose if you had been interrupted you would have used the firearms which were found upon you?"

"Only to scare them."

"Then you confess to having entered the office and helped to carry off the safes?"

"That's about the size of it."

"What was your original plan?"

"We intended to carry off the safe in a hack which one of us had stolen on the edge of the market. If we had done that it would never have been seen again."

"Why not?"

"I'll tell you further on."

"Go on!"

"The hack was old and rickety and so we could not carry off two safes at once. On that account we would have had to make two trips. We had calculated the time—which was very short—and we had gone too far to retire."

"What had you done?"

"We were provided with a two-wheeled hand-cart belonging to the Public Works, which the paviors had left at the corner of the Rue de Pompe and the Rue de Longchamps. In the box on the handcart were a lot of tools—pickaxes, chisels, spades, pincers, crowbars and other implements, made much stronger than our own, but not so light or so fine. We dumped the chest and put the two safes on the hand cart."

"Nobody disturbed you?"

"Not a soul."

"If it had not been for this hand-cart, then, you would not have been able to carry off the safe?"

"Of course not. We would have had to return for the second safe."

"Where did you leave the hand-cart?"

"On the Rue de la Faisanderie."

"How long did it take you to break open the safes?"

"With the tools we had—about forty-five minutes."

"You persist in refusing to disclose your accomplices?"

"I do."

"If you had not been short of time, where would you have taken the two safes?"

"To the Rue Boulamoilliers."

"On what floor is your hiding-place?"

"Oh! in the basement. But what is the use of wasting any more time in questions?"

"How do you get in there?"

"Like any ordinary locksmith."

"Do the janitors know you there?"

"There is only a janitress. Perhaps she has seen me, but she certainly doesn't know me by name."

"Are you willing to take me there?"

"With all the pleasure in life."

The house in the Boulamoilliers was, to all appearances, a very respectable one. A middle-aged woman was the janitress. In reply to a question from the judge she said that she had a Monsieur Monsignor for a tenant.

"What is his business?"

"I believe he is a dealer in antiquities."

"Is he in?"

"No. He is out of town. In fact, his real residence is in Anvers. He never sleeps here, and uses the basement floor for a storeroom, in which he keeps a lot of things, which are always carefully packed up."

"Who brings his goods here?"

"Oh! Different men."

"Are they well dressed?"

"Just about as well as you and the other gentlemen are."

"How many of them are there?"

"Three—sometimes four."

"Would you recognize Monsieur Monsignor?"

"Easily."

"Look at this man, who is charged with breaking into an inhabited building and committing a robbery."

"That is not Monsieur Monsignor. I have never seen him before that I know of. My tenant is bigger every way. His hair and beard are red and he wears them quite long."

"How do these men of whom you speak get into Monsieur Monsignor's quarters?"

"With a regular latch key."

"Have you a latch key?"

"No! The day my tenant signed the lease he had the lock taken off and a new one put on in its place. The fastenings are very strong and if you want to get in you must get the help of a locksmith."

At a signal from his chief the detective, Humming-Bird, went in search of the smith who had changed the locks.

After a good deal of trouble the lock was forced and an entrance was effected. Then the windows and shutters were thrown open. The sudden influx of daylight disclosed, on the floor, three safes surrounded by empty boxes and packing cases, and a quantity of tools. On one of the boxes was found a railroad label reading: "Mails. Extra express. Marseilles."

The judge asked Lover the origin of this box.

"I don't know, and if I did this is not the time for me to tell you. However, I'll show you how we mastered these safes, which had the appearance of being so strong and which, as a matter of fact, are worse than useless. There isn't one of them that is proof against being —. But I've had enough of this nonsense. Kindly send me back to my cell—for you won't get any more out of me to-day."

"Wait a minute. I only want to ask you two more questions."

"Fire away!"

"The sum found on you belonged to C. D. & Co. Are you willing to restore it to them?"

"Not yet. They're rich and can wait a little."

"How do you know?"

"By the safe."

"The police found in your hat a little phial filled with chloroform. What use did you intend to put it to?"

"That makes a third question and it must be the last. I won't answer one more. That hat didn't belong to me."

"That's a shrewd reply. It doesn't compromise you. Now, be good enough to sign your deposition."

Without a word the prisoner deliberately and slowly traced, in large Gothic letters, the name of Lover.

Humming Bird, who had been listening impatiently to the interview, hastily fastened the 'come-alongs' to his captive's wrist.

"I'm a burglar and not a murderer," exclaimed the latter. "Why do you treat me this way?"

"To make more of you," was the reply.

"I believe," remarked the judge, when the prisoner

had been removed, "that this fellow who calls himself Lover and his accomplice, Monsignor, belong to the gang of criminals belonging to the immense association of international robbers, who are 'working' the continent. These are the rascals who break into mail cars

and baggage vans and rob freight trains *in transitu*."

"Lover is a shrewd and dangerous rogue, and is a fair representative of his tribe. I do not see how he can escape a very heavy punishment this time."

CHAPTER VI.

"AMERICAN STYLE" ROBBERY.

When the Chief of Detectives dropped in next morning on his superior, it was with this astounding information:

"Lover has escaped."

"How on earth did he manage it?"

"By means of an order of transfer, on which a clever forger had counterfeited the signature of the Judge of Instruction as well as the seal of the Court. The time he took in making his admissions enabled his confederates to set all their criminal machinery going to get him out of trouble."

"Is there any clue of any sort or kind to the forger?"

"The very slightest. As I told you, the criminal classes nowadays are wonderfully well organized—forgers, robbers and chloroformists. I am morally certain that this is the same gang which forged the check for 40,000 francs which was cashed three days ago by a bank on the Rue Saint Honore."

"Is the house on the Rue Boulainothis under watch?"

"Yes! Our female agent, Gloria, has taken board with the janitress."

"I am much mortified by the rascal's escape—but I hope to see him again next Monday, when I pay my official visit to the Mazas Prison."

"It is understood, I believe, that we are going the rounds of vicious Paris again this evening, and, in consequence, I am at your service. I am merely waiting for my private secretary. When he arrives we will start. I am particularly anxious to become well posted on the several varieties of robbery which are called 'American style,' 'the give-up,' and 'the chloroform dodge.'"

"So far as the 'American style' is concerned, the newspapers have exposed it over and over again, and it has become so hackneyed that our reporters invariably wind up a description of one of these robberies with an expression of their surprise and amazement that human credulity should be so perpetually fresh and green."

"The real 'American style' of robbery is not so easy to work as most people believe. It requires the complicity of at least three operators. The first of these, in America, is called the 'capper.' It is his business to find a victim who carries plenty of ready money which is easy of access. Such a customer he carefully watches and cultivates."

"The second operator plays the part of a foreign traveler. He is, according to circumstances, an American, a Spaniard or a German. He must have rather a distinguished appearance, dresses appropriately and carries a satchel and a pair of field glasses slung over his shoulders."

"The third actor says nothing—but does the business. He is called the 'worker.'"

"The bogus foreigner begins by following the 'capper' while he picks up a victim. He then comes up to

him just as he has made fast to the 'sucker.'

"When the 'sucker' and the 'capper' are engaged in earnest conversation, the bogus tourist accosts the 'capper' with a polite bow, and asks him, in broken French, to direct him to some church, which he mentions, and which is a great distance off. He explains that one of his friends has entrusted to him a letter containing a large sum of money, which is intended for the priest of that church."

"The 'capper' describes, with great volubility, the various neighborhoods and streets which he will have to traverse to reach the church which he asks for."

"The bogus traveler pretends not to understand the directions, and winds up by bringing a foreign gold piece out of his vest pocket which he offers to the 'capper' as an inducement to personally show him the road."

"The latter hesitates for a moment or two, then accepts and urges the 'victim' to make one of the party and come along, agreeing to divide the 'tip' with him, as well as make the foreigner 'put up' more money for refreshments, etc."

"They accordingly set out, and before very long the bogus traveler informs the 'capper' that he has just arrived in Paris, and that his satchel contains a number of English gold pieces which he wants to change into French currency with as little loss as possible. He has a fear of being swindled by the regular money brokers, who are not often honest in dealing with foreigners."

"'Why, here is your chance!' cries the 'capper,' nudging his victim. 'This gentleman here has a lot of bank bills which he won't mind changing for specie—provided, of course, that he makes some discount off you.'"

"And the honest fellow tips the 'sucker' a wink, as much as to say, 'I'll see your profit is big enough on the transaction.'"

"To inspire confidence, the bogus tourist takes five or six rolls of specie out of his valise. At either end the 'sucker' distinctly sees a gold coin."

"The exchange takes place in a cafe with two entrances. On some excuse or another both the operators step out, leaving the victim alone. When he becomes suspicious and opens the roll he finds, indeed, that they have a coin at either end—but the bulk of them is made of lead pipe."

"It is an old trick, and the only novelty is in the application of it. There are various ways of putting it into execution. Sometimes the 'capper' offers to conduct the 'victim' and the bogus traveler into a house of ill-fame, not far from the fortifications. Before doing so, he suggests that it would be very dangerous to take any considerable sum of money into such a place. So he recommends them to deposit with a responsible landlord, all their valuables to be kept in his safe."

"The 'capper' and the bogus traveler join the 'suck-

er' in this prudent step. By and by, when they are all flown with wine and excitement, the bogus foreigner suggests that the 'sucker' shall go and get their purses. Ticked by such a proof of confidence he hurries round to the place of deposit, only to find that the 'worker' has preceded him with the landlord's receipt and disappeared with all the valuables. He rushes round to the house of ill-fame to tell his new found friends, and is petrified to find that they, too, have vanished.

"As you may perceive, patience is a 'capper's' sovereign virtue. He often spends an entire week hunting his game without any result whatever.

"The real 'American style,' as I said before, is not so easy as most people imagine.

"Its execution is only undertaken by the very first-class crooks.

"The fellows engaged in it are the very flower of the criminals of all nationalities. It is an immense organization, and its operations are usually conducted on a gigantic scale, with great daring and skill.

"The first-class operators of the 'American style' hang round the great railroad stations and make a business of laying for the simple people who are returning to the country to end their days in comfort on the small fortunes they have accumulated with great thrift and toil.

"So thorough is the organization of these rogues that the principal members restrict themselves to constantly crossing between America and Europe. They are thus enabled to become acquainted with the passengers on board the steamers, and deliberately select their victims.

"Usually they take leave of the victims on the boat. A cipher dispatch is forwarded to the 'workers,' in which are full descriptions and particulars.

"These latter are so precise and so accurate that sometimes a mere exchange of satchels suffices. When the victim arrives at his destination and unpacks his money-bag he finds it full of pebbles and other rubbish.

"As soon as the victim who has been described lands from the steamer or the railroad train, he sees approaching him, according to his own nationality, an Italian, an Englishman, a German or a Frenchman who sets out to gain his confidence. He wears a costume similar to that of the victim and introduces himself as a fellow-countryman.

"The principle involved in this sort of robbery is confidence. Everything depends on that. The guide who offers himself to the traveler leaves nothing undone to gain it. He gives out that he is a rich man, very kind hearted and anxious to be of service to his countryman. He speaks to him, in his native language, of his country, his village, his family and otherwise plays upon the sensibilities on which the cipher des-

patch has posted him.

"The unfortunate 'sucker,' delighted with such unlooked-for good fortune, is convinced that he has indeed found a fellow-countryman—one who is almost a brother. He tells him everything, his past as well as his future hopes and prospects.

"If a police officer were, at this stage, to interrupt the little game and warn the victim, the chances are that he would take his trouble for nothing.

"To account for their being on hand, the 'operators' declare that they are on their way to collect a legacy. Legal processes and settlements are long and tedious and they have to be patient. Thus, bit by bit, they win the entire confidence of their victims.

"The poor devil, thus taken in tow, partially yields absolutely to the influence and suggestions of his new found friend.

"The latter deluges him with good advice.

"'Look out for thieves in Paris,' he says over and over again. 'The town is full of rascals—fellows who keep an eye on you and who are bound to get your money somehow or anyhow. If they succeed, it is all up with you. Sometimes the police make an arrest or two—but they never recover a single sou of the plunder. Take my advice as that of a man who is not only a compatriot, but who knows a thing or two. In fact it wouldn't be a bad idea to let me take charge of your cash and defray your expenses until you are settled.'

"The 'sucker' is visibly impressed by the friendliness and goodfellowship as well as by the experience of the cunning 'operator'

"The latter continues:

"'You see I have had to pay for my knowledge, and I defy any thief to get the better of me.'

"In due time the victim hands his valuables over to the thief. That evening the latter hands his dupe twenty francs to buy some good cigars with. The 'sucker' steps into a shop to execute the commission. When he emerges his benefactor has vanished.

"In this business the Italian operator takes the very first place. He is naturally endowed with gracious and prepossessing manners, and is wonderfully serious and imperturbable. He possesses every quality that makes an ideal operator, and is as full of intrigue and diplomacy as any Oriental.

"The tactics of these fellows is superb. They take in an entire street and both sides of it when they are 'working,' so as not only to keep an eye on the 'sucker,' but to watch the police.

"Every gesture of their confederates is a signal which they immediately understand and act upon. It takes officers of rare skill and knowledge to keep abreast of these dangerous and subtle scoundrels,

CHAPTER VII.

THE "GIVE-UP" STYLE.

"The three most active varieties of thief are the pick-pocket, the American-style confidence operator and the 'give-up' crook. Each has his own way of working and his own rules and systems.

"I have special detectives for each class of "crook," and they have plenty of work on hand usually.

"The 'give-up' thieves are divided into two classes, whose manners and customs are diametrically opposed.

"The first is the least dangerous, but it expends its strength in the enjoyment of an impunity which is almost guaranteed to it by the kind of life it leads. It is made up of Bohemians.

"France, like all other civilized countries, has been overrun for centuries by men who are in constant rebellion against the regulations of society, who revel in idleness and look forward exclusively to enjoying themselves at other people's expense. They have an actual horror of any regular occupation or toil.

"They are easily identified by their strongly marked features and their dark complexions.

"Belonging to no nationality in particular, they hate all with equal ferocity, and pass their existence defying the laws of every well-governed people under the sun. These fellows speak a jargon, utterly unlike any known language, the words of which are generally long-drawn and uncouth, or soft and agreeable, according to circumstances. It is a sort of gipsy dialect invented by themselves, which is as full of business meaning as a commercial cipher code.

"They inhabit the vehicles called 'caravans' which are often seen in the neighborhood of the fortifications and where the sexes commingle in the most brutal and disgusting promiscuity.

"Their existence, in these locomotive dens, is that of the fox. Indeed, they seem to select that wily animal as their model, and imitate him with unconscious fidelity.

"Professing a great scorn and contempt for honest and serious work, they possess, all the same, in the highest degree, a spirit of forethought. They are, comparatively speaking, sober and frugal.

"These Bohemians, who call themselves *Ramontitch-els*, practice various professions, which are always of a wandering and irregular nature. They are peddlers, fortune-tellers, wild-beast tamers.

"They are much given to arson and incendiarism, if such crimes are necessary to carry out their plans of robbery. But they seldom have enough courage to commit murder.

"The men are principally addicted to stealing animals and poultry. Their chickens and their horses are ill-gotten, as a rule.

"The children, wretchedly clothed, without shoes or stockings, peddle wicker-baskets.

"The women all practice the 'give up' game, which consists in inducing an innocent victim to put down a piece of money for some object, the article and the cash both disappearing like a miracle.

"Some of them, the more skillful especially, have other tricks. Knowing by experience the stupidity and credulity of the peasant women, they tell them that they (the gipsies) have second sight, and that their purses contain false money. The peasants, frightened out of their lives, at once reveal their purses and their contents, upon which the thieves pronounce all foreign coins to be counterfeits, and promptly confiscate them with an air of benevolence.

"The second class of these rogues is the more formidable. It is made up of gamblers, touts and black-legs generally. Their specialty is the getting of a storekeeper to change a banknote of considerable amount. The moment the change is made the operator dashes off with it and with the banknote as well.

"In every instance the operator either hires or owns a fast horse and a light trap in which he easily evades pursuit. Of course it is in provincial towns that these rascals achieve their greatest success.

"Another trick is worked in couples. While one thief bargains with some storekeeper for an article, at a given signal another enters and distracts the merchant's attention. In an instant some valuable disappears."

"Before familiarizing you with the tricks and devices used by the chloroformists, you must permit me, Monsieur the Prefect, to begin with a story of which a very prominent and well-known financier is the hero.

"It is related to the subject which you are so anxious to know all about.

"This money-making speculator, who was of German origin and the owner of a large fortune, made rather questionably on the Stock Exchange, was a prisoner in Mazas.

"He was convicted, in spite of his nationality or the help of several political friends who would not care to see their names dragged through the mud and mire of criminal proceedings. He had been, at various times, closely connected with men who would make any and every effort to save him rather than be involved by name in his ruin and disgrace.

"The Attorney-General was deaf to all pleas and intercessions, however, and several eager offers of bail were firmly but politely declined.

"What made the authorities all the more implacable was that a well-connected rogue of the same sort and class had been treated with great indulgence, and had made up for it by a sudden and mysterious disappearance. Strict orders, therefore, were given to the police officers who had him in charge and who, every morning at 10 o'clock, conducted him to the office of the experts who were charged with examining his books.

"One privilege, however, had not been withdrawn from him. He was allowed to lunch every noon, at his own expense, in the office of the experts.

"A waiter brought him, daily, a hamper of provisions in such great abundance that they would have sufficed for several persons. In full view of the officers, the culprit absorbed, in one order, a lobster, a chicken, some Perigord pie, cheese and fruit, the repast being irrigated by some fine white wine.

"The officers hurriedly devoured, meanwhile, some bread and cheese, with a few figs or other fruit for dessert.

"Try some of this Strasburg pate or a chicken wing. You must have quite an appetite watching me eat."

"The Prefect had established a rule that none of his subordinates should accept even the very slightest favor or gratuity from a prisoner, so the two officers declined the offer with thanks.

"Every evening between seven and eight, the prisoner was conducted back to the House of Detention and, acting under orders, he was always transferred in a cab, in the custody of the same agents.

"This is how he got the best of them. He always smoked cigars, expressly imported from Havana, of the very best brand. The gilt bands on them read: *'Non plus ultra.'*

"One night, a hack with doors and window blinds closed, drew up at the entrance to the Mazas prison. The driver, seeing nobody alight, descended from his box, opened the door and of the three passengers with whom he had started saw only two.

"He shook them soundly, for both were fast asleep and snoring. Being able to do nothing with them he summoned a policeman, who jumped on the box and directed him to drive around to the police station of the quarter.

"When the two sleepers awoke they appeared to be stupefied and confused. The last thing they recollected was that on the Place de la Bastille they had been seized with very strange and disagreeable symptoms, which ended in vertigo and unconsciousness. Contrary to their general practice each had accepted a cigar from the prisoner—and the cigars were drugged."

"Are there many thieves who use narcotics?"

"There are a few, and they must not be confounded with the chloroformists. They make a specialty of dealing with the simpletons who are always ready to drink with anybody whether they know him or not. After being assured that the victim has money on his person, the operator treats him to a cigar loaded with opium, or pours into his glass some narcotic drops, which lull him to sleep and facilitate the work of robbery.

"Often these fellows operate on bank clerks and messengers whom they pick up in the saloons near the big railroad stations. Frequently they lie in wait in these places, smoking or playing dominoes, but keeping always a bright look-out for 'subjects.'

When a 'sucker' turns up they engage him in a casual conversation and then propose a little game of some kind just for the drinks.

"The 'sucker' wins at first, and is naturally delighted. Little by little his sensations of pleasure begin to diminish. His motor nerves perform their functions badly and irregularly. A general sensation of confusion and discomfort pervades him. He can't explain his feelings, but he begins to lose control of himself. In due time he loses his faculties. He drops his cards and sinks into an uneasy but profound slumber, from which he wakes to find himself minus his watch and money, in the presence of a landlord who is angrily demanding payment for the drinks.

"The victim of such a process is always very sick, in consequence. But the 'dose' is never fatal—something which cannot be said of the administration of chloroform by crooks.

"Some surgeons declare that it is very difficult—almost impossible—to administer chloroform to an unconscious sleeping individual. Others affirm that it is quite easy. On this score the chloroformists could give both a good deal of enlightenment and information. For they employ it with great skill, sometimes using a sponge, and sometimes administering it on a pocket handkerchief.

"As everybody knows, chloroform when used recklessly, is a very dangerous drug, and often has the most deplorable consequences.

"These chloroformists are most skillful and audacious. You meet them on railroads, on steamships, in hotels. Essentially cosmopolitan, they spend the greater portion of their lives travelling. They are as full of geographical information as a guide-book, and they know every watering-place and health resort patronized by millionaires and persons of means.

"The chloroformist is usually a 'spoiled' medical student who has taken a course, either in whole or in part, at the Schools, where he has learned how to use narcotics.

"A man of the world, full of information and good humor, his conversation is usually very agreeable, and he speaks two or three languages with fluency and grace, generally of a most prepossessing exterior. When he deals with women he usually figures as a rich bachelor with matrimonial designs. He is especially successful with wealthy and vulgar 'mamas'—for he takes extra pains to ingratiate himself with that class.

"When traveling or 'working' on a railroad, this is how he operates:

"He first 'places' a pocketbook. That is to say, he hangs round a railroad station until he sees and selects a particularly well-lined purse. When he has made his choice he buys a ticket for the same destination as his victim. In his satchel he carries a supply of eatables and cigars, and above all, of some excellent liquor. Often a pack of cards makes up his outfit.



THE BURGLAR IN THE CONVENT.

"He gets into the same compartment with his victim and dexterously engages him in conversation. When a third of the trip is traversed he cleverly leads the discussion to a denunciation of the stop-over eating saloon, makes fun of the viands and protests that he can't for the life of him endure the bustle and hurry of lunching under such conditions. The next step, and the most natural in the world, is to offer his fellow traveler a share of his own dainty provisions.

"In case of refusal, when his repast is finished, he politely offers the victim a drugged cigar or a 'dosed' glass of liquor.

"The conversation is sustained—but grows tiresome. The rumble of the train swells into an ominous roar. In an incredibly short space of time the luckless 'sucker' drops into a heavy lethargy. The chloroformist at once uncorks his little phial and keeps it for some seconds under the nose of the sleeper. At the same time he gently applies a leaf of the thinnest possible parchment over his mouth to keep him from inhaling atmospheric and unvitiated air.

"This parchment is called 'a stifier,' and is made like the bottom of a carnival mask.

"Thus secured, the thief goes to work with speed, yet deliberation. He opens the coveted pocketbook and quickly empties it of all save one or two small bank notes. He replaces it in the pocket where he found it, and disdains to appropriate the jewelry on his 'subject's' person.

"At the next station he alights and disappears.

"Of course he spares his victim's jewelry because it might give a clew to him and cause his arrest. He has another motive for always leaving a little money in the pocketbook. It is this: The 'victim' finding some money left, decides that he was not robbed but must have been cheated in making change, or must have dropped some of his wealth. Another and graver motive for leaving some money in the pocketbook is this:

"Suppose the 'dose' were to prove fatal. The authorities on examining the corpse and finding money and jewelry on it, would never suspect that a robbery had been perpetrated.

"It may have been a singular coincidence, and it may have been something else, but recently on a single railroad, at the same hour and the same place, three mysterious unknown corpses were found, two of them in the same compartment.

"On steamers, the chloroformist uses all his tricks and devices. Life on board is dull and monotonous. Time hangs heavy and has to be killed. Everybody gets stupid and drowsy and falls asleep watching the sky and waves.

"An agreeable and vivacious conversationalist has everything his own way. It must be remembered that most ocean travelers are very uninteresting people.

"The chloroformist usually passes himself off as a doctor, knowing that women have a special weakness for medical men. If the weather turns out rough, he is full of suggestions and prescriptions. What, for instance is to be compared with a nice fresh egg, beaten up in a little Madeira? Father, mother—the entire family regards him with admiration and gratitude.

"The egg and Madeira prescription gives his other

fellow passengers confidence in him. How easy then, to 'dose' some rich planter or American traveler.

"When they land, he freezes on to his real victim, whom he usually invites to dine with him in a comfortable restaurant where they can get a private room. The private room is close and stuffy and the window is opened to give them air. The dinner is finished and the waiter has gone to fetch the coffee and liqueurs. The thief seizes his opportunity and invites his friend to get a breath of fresh air at the open window. The coffee is served meanwhile. Then the 'operator' calls the attention of his guest to some girl passing by. When his attention is diverted, the 'dose' drops mercilessly into the victim's coffee cup. Then the victim drinks—and falls asleep. As if everybody doesn't fall asleep after a good dinner?

"I have a cousin who was the secretary and treasurer of a large industrial and commercial company which had its headquarters in Bordeaux. He visited Paris three or four times every year. Being a man of regular habits, on each occasion he went to the same hotel, which is one of the best appointed and most exclusive in town.

"On his last visit, he put up at this house. That afternoon he had drawn from his bank, in cash, the sum of 50,000 francs (\$10,000). As he was obliged to leave very early in the morning, contrary to his usual habit, he forbore to deposit his money in the hotel safe.

"He went to bed at nine o'clock. He put his clothing on an easy chair after making sure of the presence, in one of his pockets, of the 50,000 francs, done up in the identical parcel he had drawn from the bank.

"My cousin, for twenty years, always and invariably woke every morning at four o'clock. It was an absolutely ineradicable habit with him.

"At nine o'clock next morning he was still asleep. By and by he opened his eyes, vaguely conscious of having heard unusual sounds in his sleep.

"His instant reflection was 'I have been robbed.'

"A hasty glance confirmed the suspicion. The drawer of the dressing case, instead of being in its usual place, was at the other end of the room, in an easy chair. In it were his key, his watch and a certain amount of money.

"Bounding across the room he wildly opened the pocket of his coat. The package was still there, but its seal had been broken, and, instead of his 50,000 francs it contained a supplement of *Figaro*.

"He notified the police instantly, and a most vigorous search was made. The landlord of the hotel took extra trouble to try and get some light on the robbery. So far as his employees were concerned they seemed to be beyond all suspicion.

"He had, beyond all doubt, been followed and shadowed, and, through his negligence in omitting to shoot the bolt of the door, entrance had been easily effected with a false key.

"My cousin said that on waking he felt a peculiar and most disagreeable sensation in the joints of his upper jaw and a horrible tickling or pricking in his nose. His expression was vacant and wandering and it was all he could do to carry his head straight.

"During the whole of the next day he was incessantly struggling with a desire to go to sleep,

CHAPTER VIII.

CHLOROFORMISTS AND SHOPLIFTERS.

"Mr. Williamson, the Chief of Police of public security in London, arrived in Paris the other day in search of a very dangerous Dutch criminal, who was interrupted in the very act of committing a robbery in a hotel close by Charing Cross railroad station.

"When the victim was first seen, laid out on a bed, pale and motionless, she was taken for dead. She was, however, merely in a heavily drugged slumber.

"The thief in getting out of the window, had been so pressed that he had left his hat behind him, in the crown of which he had fixed with a light elastic loop a small flask or phial of black glass, which had contained chloroform.

"Between the bed and the table Mr. Williamson picked up a sponge, shaped something like a mushroom, in the hollow of which lingered the characteristic etherial vapor of chloroform.

"It came out in our inquiries that the robber's sister had been once employed in the English hotel, and that she was, afterwards, a servant in that in which my cousin was drugged in Paris.

"Unfortunately we could find no clue to the whereabouts of either of them.

"I had occasion once to converse with a forger, who was in a prison hospital, and who was acquainted with some very well-known chloroformists.

"The first question he asked me was, 'Did they leave your cousin any money and his jewelry.' When I replied in the affirmative, he said, 'Just so. That's their regular way of doing business. Regular habits are fatal blunders on the part of crooks.

"Chloroformists are artists out and out. I have seen them at work and known them intimately for fifteen years and I have never known one to get pinched.

"Aren't you exaggerating? I said.

"Not a bit," he responded, and he told me the following:

"When I lived in Chicago there was a good deal of talk about a gang of chloroformists, who held an annual meeting at which new sets of grips and pass words and other signals were decided upon. The emblem of the gang was a trinket, a ring, a breastpin, the handle of a cane or of an umbrella—something easy to show and see. Correspondence between the members of the gang was always signed by three initials and double numbers—for instance: B. K. V.—19.22."

"The chloroformists conceal with the greatest care everything likely to betray their identity or their occupation. The moment they are arrested they bend every energy to destroy the tell-tale phial of chloroform which they carry.

"The principal French cities in which they carry on business are Havre, Dunkerque, Rouen, Bordeaux and Marseilles.

"It is an unpromising sign that women of the town have taken to practising the chloroform racket. The other day two prostitutes were taken dead to rights committing a robbery in the Hotel Splendide. On both

of them were found small phials of black glass full of chloroform.

"They were passing for two young sisters just arrived from the country to stop over night in Paris.

"The black glass phials proved that they were in intimate relation with persons having special acquaintance with drugs and the handling of them. Women, as a rule, do not know without being told that air and light have a damaging influence on chloroform.

"The use of narcotic poisons has a most confusing effect on all judicial magistrates. In the first place, the victim does not know whether he has been in a natural or a drugged sleep. The idea does not occur to him, and instead of being closely questioned by judges with a proper theory, many an important clew is allowed to go by default.

"In case of a death from narcotic poisoning caused by a chloroformist, if it has taken place at a hotel, there is very naturally a strong desire on the part of all concerned to gloss the affair over. An autopsy is scarcely ever made. If it were made some very curious disclosures might ensue.

"The tribe of thieves and assassins does not diminish. On the contrary, it is always increasing and constantly multiplying its various methods of doing business.

"Robberies with violence and commonplace burglaries will, in due time, disappear, and a more highly cultivated and skillful school of scoundrels is fast being spread over the world at large.

"For instance, it is only recently that murders and thefts of moving railroad trains have become common.

"They used to be quite rare.

"To be robbed or murdered while traveling used to be regarded as a fantastic and romantic thing, barely possible, whereas, in our day, both crimes are frequently committed.

"The great shops of Paris, some thirty in number, are always well patronized by high and low crooks. These immense places, built and conducted like markets, are so many ant-hills, swarming with clerks and customers. They are constantly robbed by the staff of employees and by the people who come there pretending to do some shopping. Once a month there is a bargain sale in most of them, which are densely thronged by women, idlers and the silly, mentally infirm creatures who are in search of amorous intrigues. These crowds afford excellent opportunities to the industrious army of thieves.

"In the case of shoplifters, a woman penetrating to the centre of one of these vast establishments is immediately surrounded by every variety of temptation and seduction. A dangerous influence permeates and controls her. If she hesitates, she is, indeed, lost. It is not only her pocketbook which is imperilled. Too often her character and the fair fame of her family are at stake.

"On every ground I object to the immense bazaar of the present day. They confront the weaker sex with every form of seduction, temptation and corruption.



NABBED BY FEMALE PICKPOCKETS.

Vastly to be preferred were the modest shops of ancient days where women sought what they really wanted, and were not cajoled into acquiring, no matter how, what they actually did not need.

"It is an ominous and most significant fact that during the past five years no less than one hundred and fifty robberies have occurred every day in the thirty principal stores of Paris. That makes a daily average of five robberies in each store, and as only the gravest and most serious are reported, you can form an idea of the tremendous dishonesty rife in these mammoth establishments.

"It has been proved by official research that the detective police and the special officers employed by the stores only discover one-fourth of the depredations committed in them.

"In order to avoid all danger of false imprisonment, an arrest is only made when the prisoner has been seen to commit two robberies running. The detective police operate only on the sidewalks and the edges of the crowd. Within the building, the special officers, who are usually retired policemen, have exclusive charge.

"When a regular detective makes an arrest he has to conduct his prisoner immediately before a commissary of police. When the capture is made by one of the special officers of the establishment, he rings an electric bell, which at once convenes the directorate of the store, before whom the prisoner is brought.

"The directorate acts upon the case without any delay or hesitation. If the prisoner confesses the theft, proves her identity and signs an obligation to indemnify the administration of the store, she is searched both personally and as to her residence without recourse being had to the regular police.

"When her house is searched, all new goods are pitilessly confiscated.

"Then the culprit is compelled to pay over a certain sum of money, which is determined by her wealth and social condition, to a fund devoted to the poor. This fine ranges from 100 to 10,000 francs.

"On the other hand, if the culprit makes no confession and persists in denying the charge, she is handed over to the regular police.

"The number of persons afflicted with kleptomania is beyond all belief. Put down those who reside in the department of the Seine alone at 100,000 and you will considerably fall short of the truth. Every class is represented.

"In the case of women, impunity gives them assurance. For every single thief who steals under the stress of necessity, you will find a hundred who suffer no need whatever. We arrest one workingwoman for every hundred society ladies, and, in almost every instance, we arrest the workingwoman at Christmas time for stealing some little toy for her baby. It is true, of course, that the workingwoman has less time to be dishonest, and has fewer temptations. Servants out of place commit numerous thefts. But where we arrest ten domestics, we capture a hundred governesses, who, curiously enough, are especially addicted to stealing gloves.

"You would be petrified to see the records of the Grand Bazaar, in which are carefully registered the names and addresses of women of good family and high social standing who have been compelled to tearfully enroll their confessions among those of prostitutes and professional shoplifters! In the case of the latter, the records include a photograph of the thief,

CHAPTER IX.

SHOPLIFTERS.—(CONTINUED).

"One of the strangest things about shoplifting is that many of its professors are in a sense monomaniacs who go in for 'collecting' one special line of articles. One accumulates nut-crackers, another corkscrews, a third cuffs and collars, a fourth pepper-casters, a fifth spirit lamps, and so on. Very frequently the kleptomaniacs have no earthly use for the goods they steal.

"Poverty is seldom pleaded as an excuse, and the woman who is addicted to shoplifting is, as a rule, a gay and festive creature who enjoys life to the uttermost. Only one woman in a thousand steals a garment for her child.

"Just as most public men yearn to be the owners of decorations, most fashionable women crave laces, silks and diamonds. If they are homely they want to be attractive, and if they are pretty they want to have their charms expressed in the height of fashion. It is a law of feminine existence. Poor or rich, they are all equally possessed by the same cupidity.

"Stores in which novelties are sold are a paradise for these women. The attractions they see on every side are absolutely irresistible, and they make no effort to restrain themselves.

"The woman who steals deliberately and with calculation is not a kleptomaniac—she is, simply, a thief.

"Fashionable milliners, game-dealers and confectioners are well up in the way of this class of customer.

They provide a remedy by posting one of the clerks at the door, who asks the lady as she goes out whether she hasn't forgotten something. In this delicate way the price of a missing box of candies or some other trifle is usually recovered.

"There is a certain Madame de F.—a lady of the highest society—whose pilferings are all known to the police. Eight days ago she 'collared' a *pate de foie gras*, worth 40 francs (\$8), in a store where she had just paid a very large bill.

"It seemed a terrible thing to suspect so prominent a lady—in whose drawing rooms the leaders of Parisian society constantly commingle.

"She has horses and carriages. Her husband occupies a distinguished position and is universally respected and esteemed. She is very rich and far above the seductions of coquetry and the pressure of need.

"It was, however, by no means the first time she yielded to temptation, and a good many dealers in delicacies are well acquainted with her 'weakness.'

"It is the fashion, nowadays, to plead insanity as a defence for almost every variety of crime, and the most recent outcome of this theory is the statement that pregnancy, which works certain mental changes in some women, must be considered a mitigating circumstance.

"For example, the other day there occurred a curi-

ous illustration of this. The widow of an engineer of the department of canals and bridges met with what Sarah Bernhardt calls 'a little accident' two years after the death of her husband. Unable any longer to conceal the consequences of her error, she made some excuse or another and came to Paris in search of a midwife.

"Caught in the act of pilfering from a big dry goods store, she was arrested and searched. About twenty articles of the most trifling value were taken from her. They were discovered in her lodgings, piled in great disorder in the bottom of a wardrobe.

"Now, this woman was most clearly irresponsible. She had come to Paris to escape the results of a misstep, and she committed others much less natural, not in any degree excusable, and which, under judicial prosecution, would entail the greatest and vilest disgrace on herself and family.

"The double offense was more than she could stand charged with—and she committed suicide.

"I once saw a pickpocket sixty-seven years of age, acquitted in a police court on the preposterous plea that when she was in an interesting condition she was not responsible for her acts.

"Perhaps the credit given to this extraordinary excuse in behalf of a woman sixty-seven years old, was due to the fact that she had retained, with a fee of 3,000 francs (\$600), one of the leaders of the Paris bar.

"In every instance "kleptomania" shows itself to the greatest advantage in the big stores. It has grown so common and so general that it really seems to be contagious. If we go on excusing it and treating it as a mental infirmity instead of a criminal habit, we shall have to establish separate asylums for victims of the malady.

"We are now in one of the largest establishments in Paris. Look down from this gallery, if you please, on that seething, jostling, elbowing tide of humanity of which heads form the waves.

"You will notice that the male sex is altogether in the minority.

"Watch that man, carelessly dressed and negligent of his appearance, with the polka-dotted necktie. He is quite alone. What is he in search of? The air round him is charged with womanliness, if I may coin an expression. He is borne hither and thither like a cork on a stream. Something gets in the way of the moving mass of women. They stop for an instant. The man makes prodigious efforts to free himself from contact with the crowd. He succeeds. The way is made clear for him. But it is evidently not liberty of which he is in search. In place of profiting by his escape from the crowd, he plunges into it once more. See the smile of balmy contentment with which he resigns himself to being buffeted and jostled and borne this way and that way by the pressure of women. Watch him, with open nostrils, drinking in the odor of the femininity in which he is enveloped.

"He is an erotic crank. He delights in the accidental and thoughtless contacts of the moment as a fish delights in its native element.

"Such a monomaniac was Monsieur X., whose arrest must still be fresh in your mind.

"These erotic cranks who revel in imperceptible contact with women, under the cover of which they occasionally take liberties, are astonishingly numerous. There are as many of them as there are pickpockets, and one class is often mistaken for the other.

"It is not an easy subject to treat or discuss. Medical men, I believe, have classified it.

"Every day in some of the big stores of Paris young and pretty women complain of the gross and indecent familiarities to which they are subjected in a crowd by men who are apparently respectable gentlemen. Most of them are between forty and fifty years of age. They dress plainly and in many instances their apparel is faded and threadbare. They attract no attention by their appearance, and are most systematic in the performances of which they are guilty.

"There is still another class whom we call 'destructive cranks.' These monomaniacs love to carry scissors and cut pieces off the clothing of the women they encounter. A good many of them make collections of the snippings they accumulate. To each they pin a card on which you may read the date, the name of the store and a brief sketch of the woman thus despoiled.

"You have no idea of the damage caused by 'destructive cranks.' They prefer, as a rule, establishments frequented by the most richly dressed women in Paris.

"Next to 'destructive cranks' come, in importance, the 'hair-cutters.' I know half a dozen of these fellows who devote themselves to cutting off the braids of young girls about ten or twelve years old. The excuses they offer when arrested are evidently mere lunatic special pleading.

"I can't help it. It is an irresistible mania with me. I never think of the child herself. It is her beautiful hair which attracts me and makes me commit the folly. I see it—and I *must* possess it.'

"Besides these 'cranks' I have on my list the collectors of handkerchiefs. The professional thief scorns a handkerchief and goes every time for the pocketbook. On the other hand, the amateur 'crank' disdains the pocketbook and aims for the handkerchief.

"Stealing handkerchiefs from young women is a regular business. At the last universal exposition, a tailor, after three successive arrests, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. His first two captures did not have any reformatory influence on him. In his room were found no less than three hundred handkerchiefs embroidered with various initials.

"When one of these fellows 'snatches' a handkerchief he passes it to his lips and revels in the perfume just as a drunkard revels in the odor of liquor.

"It is a curious fact that the women who are thus ill-treated are, as a rule, very loth to make any complaints. It is, of course, very difficult for a decent and respectable female to distinguish between accidental contact with people in a crowd and the insulting demonstrations of erotic cranks. When there is no mistaking the nature of the familiarities which are inflicted on them, they blush and get out of the way as fast as possible, rather than occasion scandal by making a scene.

"I am sorry to say that while this is the rule with the majority of women, there are a few who rather like to be insulted, and who frequent the stores with the hope that some man will be rude enough to ill-behave.

Just at this moment the electric bell sounded,

"I know what that means. The Countess de B. has, as usual, filched something from the notion counter. She has been arrested and will, as a matter of course and without the least resistance, pay 500 francs (\$100) to the charity fund."

"How old is this noble kleptomaniac?"

"About sixty. She is immensely rich, and nothing but meanness makes her a thief. We need waste no sympathy on her.



MANILLA'S BOUDOIR.

CHAPTER X.

COMMERCIAL BOHEMIA.

"We have at last escaped into the fresh air out of one of the infernos which Dante forgot to describe. What a relief it is to emerge out of that rank and close and fetid atmosphere.

"Now that we have treated our lungs to the refreshing sensation of out-doors, let us look around and scan the scene.

"On every side of us you see the parasites of the sidewalk—the merchants and hucksters of the gutters.

"There, for instance, is Memeche, whom we last saw stretched out on the flagstones of the Rue des Nois Portes. She could not have made a long stay in the hospital this time, and there she is selling, in curious contrast to her own reckless and vicious habits, little memorandum books in which to keep household accounts. As soon as she has made a handful of pennies by this, off she will go to spend every sou of it with Old Father Spectacles again.

"All round her are men who sell toy balloons, letter paper and envelopes, shoe laces, toothpicks, canes and umbrellas.

"Watch. A policeman orders them to keep moving. Memeche opens her mouth and shows her teeth at him. It may be a sign of amiability and it may be a hint that she would like to bite him.

"A little further along you see fellows who peddle pomades and soaps and other things of the sort.

"Street criers, hawkers, card and circular distributors—all look upon the public streets as their private property.

"Look at that filthy, ragged fellow all in tatters, who is scratching his back against a friendly lamp post. He opens his mouth every once in a while to howl out, 'Here you are! The latest big scandal in high life! Rich, rare and spicy! The fullest particulars!'

"Thus are the youth of both sexes cheaply and easily kept informed of all the vice and wickedness rampant in Paris.

"Outside the grammar schools and colleges and boarding schools you will find these picture dealers carrying round photographs of actresses in the garb of Eve, and books and poems, the only characteristic of which is their incredible obscenity.

"One of the principal articles dealt in by these scoundrels are transparent cards which, to reveal their indecencies, must be held up before the light.

"Another part of this neighborhood is taken up by scoundrels who deal in pinchbeck jewelry and watches, with the whispered pretence that they are stolen goods which cannot be sold in stores.

"All these minor rogues form a steadily increasing host which propagates itself and multiplies like maggots in a carcass. Their tireless industry in wrongdoing illustrates anew and over and over again the great maxim of Darwin—"The struggle for life."

"The grand army of vice is spread broadcast everywhere and under all conceivable conditions. It is a rising tide which is constantly mounting higher and higher, and which will finally engulf us unless we can discover some means of combatting and suppressing it.

"The first city ordinance levelled at professional va-

grants, vagabonds and outlaws was issued over two hundred years ago. They were driven out of their old retreat, the Court of Miracles, which the ancient chroniclers describe in 1684 as follows:

"There were always to be found real or bogus sufferers and cripples showing their wounds and scars and maimed limbs, beggars plying their trade, thieves concocting fresh robberies or dividing the plunder of old ones, and a hideous prostitution which flourished in broad daylight, to the great shame and dishonor of the capital of a great kingdom."

"It is not only near the big stores that you find the pickets and outposts of the grand army of crime. The financial quarters of the city swarm with them. The Stock Exchange is surrounded by flocks of clever criminals, just as a barrel of sugar is flocked to by millions of flies.

"The theatres have their own special hangers-on—peddlers of programmes and carriage-door openers—who make no bones of seizing your watch or your fan or your opera glasses, if you don't keep a very bright look out.

"The ticket speculator is a variety of rascal whom we have constantly tried to put down, but who survives the hostile attentions of the police and utterly refuses to be wiped out of existence.

"In 1875 M. Leon Renault gave strict orders that the sale of unauthorized tickets by speculators should be stopped. The hunt for offenders was kept up for ten days, and at the end of that time the police headquarters prison was full. Some of the culprits had as much as 500 or 1,000 francs on their persons, which made it impossible for the authorities to hold them as vagabonds.

"Then appeared in the *Figaro*, the *Evenement* and the *Gaulois*, a most interesting letter from a theatrical official. It reads as follows:

"*Monsieur Prefect:*

"I have the honor to inform you that the press has for some time been calling attention to a series of disgraceful frauds perpetrated on the sidewalks of theatres, especially when a play has achieved a marked success.

"Every theatre in Paris has two contractors for tickets. One represents the management and the box-office; the other attends to the interests of the author.

"But, in addition to these regular official ticket dealers, there is a large number of individuals—men utterly without character or responsibility—who, profiting by the credulity of the public, sell at extravagant prices the most worthless seats in the house by misrepresenting their location and quality.

"The simplest plan whereby to meet and crush this despicable robbery, and to raise a new fund for charitable purposes, is to imitate England and Germany, where ticket-sellers are licensed by the authorities, and correspondingly taxed.

"Licensed dealers in tickets could employ other persons to actually sell for them, but it should be provided that when an employee sold tickets he should at the same time give the customer a card bearing the name and number of the licensed dealer in whose ser-

vice he sold, so that any infraction of the law or false pretence might be traced up and duly punished as in the case of cabmen.

"The annual tax for a license should be 500 to 1,000 francs for one theatre, double the amount for two, and so on.

"This measure would give the State over 50,000 francs a year and would regulate trade without creating a monopoly.

"I sincerely hope, Monsieur Prefect, that you will immediately take these suggestions into consideration.

"E. HAVET.

"Chief of the Staff of the Theatre des Varietes."

"Now that we have arrived at a church, just cast your eye around and see all the beggars who swarm in its neighborhood. You observe hunchbacks, blind men, scarred and ulcerated wretches, and women with children who look in the last gasps of starvation.

"There may be a very few genuine cases of misfortune among them. But they constitute the minority. The greater number are rascals, male and female, who devote all their energies to theft and swindling. They are a crowd of loafers, bummers, drunkards and other scum.

"In the summer time these vagabonds sleep on the slopes of the fortifications and on the banks of the Seine. In winter they manage to survive the cold by taking refuge in unfinished houses. During the day they hang round barrack gates and hotel back entrances for food. Early in the afternoon they hunt up quarters for themselves in the public squares and parks.

"At nine o'clock this morning, in the garden of the Louvre, no less than twenty-eight vagabonds were arrested for sprawling on the benches. Among them were a couple of lunatics from the Bicetre.

"Beggings has become an industry and the false beggar is the real thief.

"Our race courses, in addition to the pickpockets, who are their special and habitual vermin, have agencies for robbery all their own. The bookmakers form a large and rascally element. Some of them form a syndicate which buys up a lot of horses and runs them in the names of mythical owners—the result of each race being deliberately planned and arranged beforehand.

"The profits of such roguery are immense and can be calculated on every time, for they know in advance the horse who is going to win.

"At the present moment an investigation is being made into a case where there is reason to believe that a well-known and highly-respected stable has let out its name to cover operations of this kind.

"It is a curious thing that want never spurs the real thief to commit a crime. Children don't begin by stealing bread or cake. Their first plunder is a knife, or a cigar-holder or some similar trinket.

"Eatables and drinkables are usually stolen not to satisfy hunger and thirst, but to gratify gluttony. Men steal wines and liquors. Women steal confectionery.

"The criminal statistics published each year by the Ministry of Justice permit us to accurately follow the movement of public morality. The inferences set forth are simply lamentable, and go to show that ignorance is *not* the parent of crime. The provinces, which are remarkable for their poverty and lack of education, are also remarkable for their freedom from criminals. Robberies are scarcely known, and of the most trifling character when they do occur.

"It is a contrary rule in the great cities, where education is widely diffused and a high order of intelligence exists.

"In Paris, the intellectual flower of the country, vice and crime in every phase, form and degree, prosper and grow, while the police remains stationary. The development of wickedness and the ingenuity with which it finds means to express itself are truly appalling.

"Twenty years ago the thieves were men of middle age, cowardly, shrinking and unskillful. They hid under cover all day, and only came out to perpetrate their evil deeds at night.

"To-day there are hundreds of pickpockets—and very skillful pickpockets—who are not over 12 years of age. At 15 they become burglars and bank robbers, and at 20 they are ripe for murder.

"The criminals of Paris are no longer afraid of daylight. They actually prefer to operate in crowded thoroughfares in the glare of the sun.

"Take the murders of the present period. Observe how much more frequent as well as how much more scientific they have become.

"Robberies are thought out beforehand with all the carefulness and calculation of an engineering experiment. And when grand schemes are put into execution, they are carried out with a thoroughness and a resolution to which it is hard to deny a kind of admiration.



WORKING THE PICKPOCKET RACKET.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLACK BAND.

"Professional thieves know the establishments where they can meet and reside in absolute security and use them as regular boarding houses.

"Beer saloons, hotels, restaurants—all are regularly 'booked' among the archives and memoranda of traveling crooks. They give each other points and, by means of conventional signs indicate to each other the character of these various resorts—distinguishing for example between places where they can be served with drinks and those where they can obtain eatables as well.

"Refuges of this kind are indicated according to their importance and convenience by a light sketch representing a locomotive, a boat, an omnibus, a street car or a cab.

"These signs leave nothing to be desired in the way of exactness. I have seen some which went so far as to designate the price of drinks.

"The proprietors of such resorts are well acquainted with the true character of their customers, whom they favor in every possible way, and conceal by ingenious subterfuges from the pursuit of the police.

"All these places are constructed with especial reference for their use by criminals. Among other conveniences, they have several means of exit through which closely-hunted crooks can rapidly and easily make their escape.

"A Prefect of Police who really wants to keep up with the movements of criminals in Paris, ought to be thoroughly advised of what takes place there night and day. He should be wise enough and shrewd enough not to trust too implicitly to the information furnished by his agents, and by personal scrutiny and inspection ought to correct the frequently inaccurate and therefore useless reports made by his subordinates on the state of the public morals.

"The den, or perhaps I ought to call it the tavern, which we are just entering is situated not very far from the opera. It stands near the Rue Faubourg-Mont Martre, and it serves as an asylum for several varieties of criminals. Although they know each other well, they make it a point while stopping here never to recognize one another.

"The predecessor of the big, handsome blonde fellow who sits at the desk was a German from Berlin. He had for a favorite customer, Jane Gray, a wonderfully beautiful girl of 25 years, with eyes of childish innocence, who was clever enough in 1874 to escape from the prison of St. Lazare made up in the disguise of a Sister of Charity.

"She was one of the most skillful members of a gang of pickpockets, who were under the protection and control of a fellow, who, under the pretext of rendering him political services, became the intimate friend of the manager of the establishment.

"This band of thieves, well-known as they were in London, made this place their refuge in exile.

"The political agent, who was arrested and sentenced with the rest when a raid was made on the gang, died recently in London in a very mysterious manner.

"This, then, is an important den?" remarked the Prefect.

"Very important, and one of its most curious features is that it is patronized by a Senator and a Deputy."

"That is a very serious statement to make."

"Serious, it is true, but a statement which I ought to make to you as Prefect of Police, Monsieur. But it ought not to surprise you, seeing that I have already pointed out to you a licensed house of ill-fame which is the property of one of the most prominent functionaries of the President's office."

"Perhaps he inherited it. It is not always easy to make a change in property when it comes to you in the shape of a legacy."

"Very true. But in this particular instance the heir, as soon as he got absolute control of the property retained the tenant. At the same time he resolved to cut down the infamous profits of the latter, so he raised her rent.

"In this place foreigners always register themselves as bookmakers, and Frenchmen always put themselves down as commercial travelers. The habitués, as you see, without being very swell or distinguished looking, have a very decent and respectable appearance. They expend reasonably large amounts on their meals and refreshments. Just see. While we are content with a modest filet at the next table they are eating roast venison."

"Isn't the venison season closed?"

"Certainly. And it has been closed for some time. But that doesn't prevent its being served to whoever orders it in this house. Nearly all the eatables here, like the cooks and the waiters, are of foreign origin. One fellow who serves us is a Swiss. Drop twenty francs (\$4) into his hands and order without the least hesitation its equivalent in tobacco, cigars, playing cards or matches—all smuggled—and as you make your exit the contraband goods you purchase will be dropped into your pocket or slipped under your arm."

"Do they ever get caught?"

"Frequently; but they pay their fines without defense or hesitation."

"How do they obtain these contraband articles?"

"From secret companies and associations which trade in foreign countries. They forward to their accomplices packages hidden in goods which pay duty. In this manner, last year, so say the statistics, no less than a million playing cards were smuggled into France.

"Our country is fairly inundated with contraband tobacco and cigars, and the ingenuity of the smugglers, who seem to strike a new device each day, has already succeeded in diminishing the receipts of the Treasury to a considerable, not to say alarming, extent.

"The Parisian accomplices of these secret organizations are known as the Black Band. There are some of them seated at table clear down the other end of the room on our right.

"There are usually twenty of them, and they make so many combinations and so many changes of appearance that the law finds it impossible as a rule to put its hand on them.

"Usually well educated and adroit, with no real profession and belonging to no recognized social class, they form, without any formality or actual organization, a nameless society which takes all sorts of forms and embarks in all sorts of enterprises.

"The members, who are united by a common interest, are faithful to each other, and are never under any circumstances guilty of treachery to one another.

"They cook up letters of credit, negotiate loans at usurious rates of interest, discount commercial paper backed by insolent rascals, who get from five to twenty francs for their signatures. They also make a living by 'bilking' manufacturers who are foolish enough to let them have goods on credit.

"These free-masonic crooks—for their order is as well 'tiled' as Masonry itself—get through a vast deal of work every day.

"Some of them devote themselves exclusively to blackmail, and many a family has been afflicted with dishonor, even suicide, at their hands.

"The working classes have a faint idea what they eat. But they are absolutely ignorant of the nature of the various fluids which they drink. As a rule, their beverages are nameless poisons fraught with the most dangerous consequences to life and health. There is nothing of the grape in their wines, and their brandy is simply a simulative chemical product.

"Thanks to the diffusion of intelligence the working people understand why official raids are made in their behalf on the cook-shops, the restaurants, dairies, groceries, wine shops and confectioners of the metropolis. They include, in the "Black Band" dishonest butchers and dealers in unwholesome meats and other viands. In like manner do they categorize peddlers and hawkers who sell their merchandise with false weights and measures.

"Middle-class people call members of the 'Black

Baud' those tradesmen who corrupt their servants with commissions and presents."

"Is there no such thing as honesty in trade!" inquired the Prefect.

"Certainly there is. Only an honest tradesman, like a virtuous woman, is never talked about."

"It is a pity," said the Prefect, "that the great discoveries of science, while they have contributed to the happiness and welfare of man, have also contributed to his dangers and injuries. Progress in chemistry, for example, has not merely helped the arts and increased human comfort. It has made the work of the adulterator of food easy and safe, and, worst of all, profitable. Honest trade has to suffer, and a premium is put upon commercial rascality and fraud. So far as I am concerned, I shall leave nothing undone to put an end to tricks and devices in commerce. Have we many such establishments as this headquarters of the 'Black Band'?"

"Too many for the good of Paris. Luckily, however, none of them are as prosperous and profitable as this.

"The proprietor of a well-known beer shop recently told a prosecuting officer that no house of the kind could exist upon the business of strictly honest and square people. If it were not for 'crooks' and prostitutes he would have to put up his shutters.

"This place, towards 1 o'clock in the morning, undergoes a very decided change. Crayfish and onion soup are to be seen on all the various tables which are crowded by 'lovers' and their girls to whom the Rue du Faubourg-Montmatre serves as a rallying point.

At this moment a young man stopped the Chief and handed him a small packet, remarking:

"You left this on the counter, sir."

"That was a smart waiter. He made up his mind to identify me as a 'runner' for smugglers so he puts on me this bundle of contraband segars. It compromises me and it reassures the smugglers sitting inside.

CHAPTER XII.

THE "SWELL" SHOPLIFTER AND THREE PRECOCIOUS LITTLE SINNERS.

* Among the professions which anxiously follow the progress of chemistry, the perfumers are entitled to a front rank.

"For example, here we are at the window of a perfumer who supplies the prettiest actresses in Paris with their articles of personal luxury.

"A recent official analysis has shown that in place of containing the extracts of beneficent and wholesome plants, his little flasks are filled with poisonous and injurious drugs, which only differ in degree of noxiousness.

"Under pompous and large-sounding names, the various powders with which women whiten their faces, shoulders and arms, are largely composed of lead.

"Bottles of hair-dye, which are advertised as "warranted harmless" have for their basis sulphate of copper and cyanide of potassium.

"Cosmetics for the face are made into the form of creams and pomades, and a chemical analysis reveals the fact that they are largely made up of mercury and carbonate of lead.

"As to the specifics guaranteed to make the hair grow on the baldest heads, they are as a rule compounded

of as many and as loathsome ingredients as the hell-broth mixed by the witches in Macbeth.

"Speaking of trade, the police of the Tenth District complain that owing to the immense and growing crowd of street hawkers, accidents are increasing on the Rues Faubourg St. Denis, Saint Martin and Temple. All the various faubourgs are invaded at all seasons of the year by these peripatetic tradespeople who often take up the middle of the street two rows deep. This obstructs the movements of vehicles and makes crossings very dangerous.

"The sidewalks are encumbered and blockaded by women who sell all sorts of merchandise out of baskets. In fact some of our principal thoroughfares have degenerated into open air markets and when the day is over, are strewn ankle deep with the remnants of fish and vegetables.

"At certain hours—say between 11 and 6, it is almost impossible to cross these streets.

"The storekeepers naturally complain of this great nuisance, which causes them a good deal of injury. They certainly have abundant reason to complain of the indifference of the authorities.



HE WAS A MASHER.



AN IMPRISONED CONVICT RELEASED BY A DESPERATE SWEETHEART.

"In order to keep on good terms with the members of the municipal council, the Prefecture of Police treats their favorites with a good deal of leniency. This multiplies the army of peddlers and hawkers, and they are not backward in showing their contempt for the officers, who are hampered by political considerations from interfering with them."

"By the way, can you explain the mysterious fact that numerous persons have recently fallen into the Canal St. Martin? It is a subject into which I want immediate inquiry made."

"Well, Monsieur le Prefect, the canal is uncovered, as you know, from the Temple bridge to the basin of la Villette. This uncovered portion is protected by safety-chains. These identical chains are themselves the cause of the very accidents they are put there to prevent."

"Instead of being kept tight and breast high, as they should, in the middle of each there is a sunken curve which almost reaches the ground. On dark days, in fog or a snow-storm, the careless passer-by trips his foot in the curve and falls head over heels into the bed of the canal."

"The poverty of the lighting of the neighborhood and the black, suffocating water of the canal, insure him a speedy and hopeless doom."

"When the body is recovered there are no marks of violence on it, and the case is unhesitatingly pronounced one of suicide."

"The sum total of human beings who come to their death in this manner every year is something frightful. The chains have been up for fifty years, and yet it has never occurred to the authorities to make them tight and secure."

"Which are the most turbulent districts of Paris?"

"The most turbulent and excitable, politically, are the Twelfth and Nineteenth. The foreign element predominates in them and they are filled with Germans, Italians, Belgians and others, who compete with our native workmen and thereby occasion much ill-feeling and a good deal of trouble."

"One moment. I see the detective you nickname Humming-Bird. He and his partner seem to be watched and followed by somebody. What are they up to?"

"I will show you. We are now close to the Ambigu theatre. At No. 4 Boulevard St. Martin is a house having an exit on the Rue de Bondy. We will cross over. You, Porthos and Humming-Bird go ahead and await us at the chief police station of the Tenth District."

"You shall see, Monsieur le Prefect, what the spy is doing and who he is. I think it is ourselves whom he is shadowing."

The spy turned out to be the proprietor of a house of ill-fame, who professed to have been employed by one of the sub-chiefs of police to keep watch of the Prefect.

That functionary addressed his "shadow" in no measured terms.

"You say you were employed to see that no injury happened to me. You have evidently kept close to me for I see on your notes a statement of what I had for dinner. Clear out of this. It is an outrage to use such a creature as you in any sort of service. The sub-chief who assigned this fellow to the task of keeping an eye on me shall receive his dismissal this evening."

"You can hardly blame him, Monsieur le Prefect," replied the Chief of Detectives. "You forgot this morning to inform your personal headquarters staff with your intentions. So, to show his zeal and concern for your welfare, the sub-chief, according to custom, selected an agent, not on the force, to follow us from place to place and keep us under supervision."

The two officers then took advantage of being in the Police Station to glance into the room in which arrested women are detained.

On a bench allotted to the prisoners were seated two ladies. The one, a handsome blonde of thirty-five, with features of remarkable delicacy, spoke French with an excellent accent, and comported herself with the utmost dignity. She was no less a personage than Mme. Marie Nasimoff, daughter of Prince Viazimski and Countess Tolstoi. The lady is therefore a bona fide Russian princess. She was divorced from her husband seven years ago by a special ukase of the Czar. The gentleman had been in the habit of knocking her about, and had actually been condemned at Nice for his shortcomings toward his spouse to three months' imprisonment. The Czar's ukase settled the matter in a way satisfactory to all parties, and thenceforth Mme. de Nasimoff, free as air, was able to enjoy life without any apprehension of blows and bruises. She shone like a star at Nice, delighting her numerous friends and acquaintances with her concerts and receptions. Her voice was much admired, and in her intervals of repose from social engagements she climbed the Mount of Parnassus and contributed the results of her draughts from the Pierian spring to the local newspapers. One of her poems was entitled "Le Regard," and treated of the "Timid Virgin" and of "Chaste Pleasure." Another was headed "Confidence a Demain," while "Deception" was the title of a third. Melancholy seems to have tuned Mme. de Nasimoff's lyre. Besides these inspired works, the minions of the law had unearthed a whole budget of correspondence with "crowned heads," which, it is to be feared, have since been shaking rather ominously.

The other tenant of the prisoners' bench was Mlle. Nadedja de Fomine. She is 36 years old, the daughter of the late Gen. Demetri, of the Czar's Guards, and to this day she receives from her imperial Majesty a yearly allowance of £120. Moreover, she writes for some of the Muscovite papers, acts as interpreter occasionally, and when she got into the scrape which launched her in the police court was playing the further role of *dame de compagnie* to Mme. Marie de Nasimoff. What had brought these Russian ladies of high degree to this unpleasant predicament? A visit to the big Louvre shops on July 15, the day after the national fete and the grand review at Longchamps. They had been watched closely by two inspectors. One of them stated that the ladies had bought a few things, but had helped themselves to many more. He warned his comrade, who arrested the Princess in the Rue de Rivoli, while he took her companion in custody. When they were searched a quantity of articles for which they had not paid were found on their persons. They formed a miscellaneous collection, including scissors, cigarette holders, pencils, cigarette papers, cheap watches and chains, soap, card cases, and toilet powder.

"You see," said the Chief of Detectives, "that what I told you of the high social condition of a good many shoplifters was not by any means a fiction."

As they sallied forth they encountered two commissionaires, who came hurrying for a stretcher in which to carry to the Lariboisiere Hospital a dry-goods porter who had sustained a serious, perhaps fatal, fall.

"He slipped upon a piece of orange peel," said a policeman, "and fell with great violence on the sidewalk. We took him to a drug store on the Rue Chateaux d'Eau, and sent for a surgeon who said it was a bad fracture of the skull which, considering the man's age, is sure to prove fatal."

"Street accidents due to carelessness," said the Chief of Detectives, "are constantly increasing, and something ought to be done about it. Butchers and truckmen, especially, are given to driving at the top of their speed through the streets. This afternoon a butcher boy, hurrying from the slaughter-houses of la Villette, dashed down hill in the faubourg St. Martin, near the Church of St. Laurent, and ran over and killed a child eight years old.

"I happened to be passing, and saw the poor little creature stretched lifeless on the pavement. In his right hand he clutched some money, and in his left was a can crushed out of shape. The milk which had formed the contents of the can was poured all over the pavement and mingled with the blood which gushed from his shattered skull."

"Poor little creature. It must have been a horrible sight."

At this moment the two functionaries encountered a police officer conveying three little girls to the station house.

"What is the case?" inquired the Prefect.

"These are three sisters," replied the officer, "whom their mother sent out begging on the pretence of selling flowers. Not wishing to return home, they straggled down to the Valmy quay and were about to jump in, when an officer, who had been watching them, took them into custody."

"What will be done with them?" asked the Prefect, in a tone of commiseration.

"Their statements will be reduced to writing and embodied in a complaint against their mother and her lover, who will be arrested for impelling minor children to vice and debauchery. The woman has often forced the children, with blows, to go out riding in close carriages with old men."

"What are the ages of the little ones?"

"Eight, eleven and thirteen. Their mother is a Pole, and sells flowers, which her lover steals from the cemeteries."

"A nice couple!" cried the astonished and disgusted Prefect.

CHAPTER XIII.

VICE AND DEBAUCHERY AS THEY PROSPER IN THE FRENCH METROPOLIS.

"The Rue Maubree (badly cleaned in old French) goes back in antiquity to the XIIIth century.

"It is a narrow street, which makes locomotion difficult and laborious, and it traverses a quarter of Paris which is composed of old houses tottering to their fall. These rookeries are inhabited by peddlers and hawkers, and the hard-working creatures who make the little French notions which are famous all over the world.

"A large proportion of the inhabitants of this district are honest working people of both sexes. But they are none the less often afflicted by the contact of women of ill-fame and their disreputable 'lovers'.

"Be good enough, Monsieur le Prefect, to examine these dark and suspicious alleys and entries, and their black walls and their still blacker staircases, on every landing of which is an overflowing leaden tank to hold the slops of each floor.

"The very air is loaded with pestilence.

"On the ground floor the stores are occupied by dealers in drinks, cheap restaurants and cook-shops. Here you will find plenty of places where the broken victuals given to beggars are bought of them and cooked over again for sale.

"The entrances are nearly all lit up by lanterns overhead, which emit a feeble and quivering light. In every instance each lantern is inscribed 'Lodging House.'

"If you want to see debauchery, vice and honest labor all mingled through their common want and misery under the same roof, you had better explore this establishment, whose windows look out on a narrow, noisome court, which exhales the most revolting and nauseous odors.

"Lodgings here, by the night, cost from 15 to 30 centimes ($7\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 cents). Such a thing as credit is utterly unknown. The motto of the place is 'No cash, no couch.'

"The apartments consist of foul dens hardly large enough to turn around in, and reeking with the most

fearful stenches. Each contains for furniture a rough wide wooden frame, which barely suggests the form of a bed. This is covered with a straw mattress encased in filthy old rags. Alongside the bed is a wooden stool, which serves for a washstand and a dressing-case. A pitcher of water—without any basin—supplies meagre facilities for washing, and a lump of clay with a hole in the middle of it does duty for a candlestick.

"These dens are the lodgings of pimps and thieves on the first floor, of prostitutes and street walkers on the second, and elsewhere to the creatures who supply licensed houses with their music.

"On the first floor some of the apartments are dormitories containing from five to ten long chests filled with straw which are accepted as the equivalents of beds. All that one has to do to make them is to turn them over with a stable fork.

"Here we are in one of these dormitories which is full for the night. Did you ever look upon a more astonishing, a more repulsive scene?

"Look around, by favor of the obscure and dingy lantern!

"Every one of the lodgers is stripped to his skin, and the heap of rags which represents the clothes they have taken off to go to bed, emits a stench to which nothing could ever do justice.

"Thanks to the fact that the only window in the place has all its panes broken, the foul air occasionally leaks out and the fresh occasionally takes its place.

"Among these fellows you will find waiters out of a job, ragpickers, streetsweepers, paviors, men who work two days a week and loaf five, beggars, pimps, thieves and swindlers."

"Do the police often visit places of this character?" inquired the Prefect.

"Very seldom. Never, you may say, unless they have some specific object in view. The last raid which took place resulted in the capture of three bur-



THEY ARE A HARD LOT.

glars and two prostitutes who were their accomplices in a big robbery."

"Who is that fellow in threadbare clothes whom we just passed and who nodded to you?"

"That is the drunken lawyer's clerk whom we saw this evening in the Red House. When he can't find quarters here he sleeps in some police station."

"Now let us explore the Rue Filles-Dieu, which is a prolongation of the Rue de Venise. It has a history of its own, and is full of traditions. In some parts it is so narrow that, by extending both arms, you can feel the wall on either side."

"Most of the houses are out of plumb, and the stores on the ground floor are used by peddlers and hawkers to keep their push-carts in."

"The rest are inhabited by prostitutes, who pay from three to five francs a day for the use of them."

"All these women are over forty years of age, and, without exception, are drunkards of the lowest description."

"They are closely watched by the police-of-morals, who regard them as especially dangerous to young shop-girls and apprentices, who swarm round here in the Rues Beaubourg, Simon Le Franc and Quincampoix."

"Here we are at the entrance of the Rue Filles-Dieu, for the demolition of which the residents of the Quartier Bonne Nouvelle have been petitioning for over twenty years."

"With great justice, they demand that daylight and fresh air shall be admitted into the hot-bed of moral and physical infection."

"The decent working population which inhabits the Cour des Miracles naturally shrinks from exposing its children to the contamination which thrives in this street."

"The explanation of the choice of this locality by the lowest set of street-walkers is lost in the mists of antiquity. According to the historians, as far back as the time of St. Louis there were houses of retreat here for repentant Magdalenes."

"The first and oldest of these asylums was that of the Filles-Dieu (Daughters of God), and, according to the usage of the day, criminals on their way to the place of execution at Montfaucon were obliged to make a station before the cross of the Filles-Dieu."

"The Sisters gave the poor wretches bread and wine, and the common people called the repast 'the God-crust.'"

"Time, revolution and progress have all conspired to make great changes here."

"The convents have disappeared, and in their place are installed ostentatious resorts of vice and infamy."

"This street, which is longer than the Rues des Anglais, Manbree and de Venise, is like a huge drain or sewer. It is very narrow and shut in between houses with cracked and filthy walls, which are always sweating with a hideous and indescribable moisture. One would suppose it was always raining here, so incessant

is the emptying of slops out of the upper windows, where you constantly see women washing off the straw mattresses which have been slept upon by drunkards."

"The sun shines only on the roofs of these houses, and occasionally steals into their garrets. No matter how hard he may try, he can never reach the damp and stenchful courts."

"Horrible and hideous as is the exterior of one of these places, it is nothing compared with the scenes inside—the crumbling walls, the stinking stairways, the slippery floors, the unmentionable insects."

"This is the home of prostitution in its vilest and most disreputable form."

"Look round on these hags. See them, in spite of the police orders, standing in their doorways soliciting for patronage with nods and winks and other gestures."

"Utterly lawless and defiant as they are, they know who we are the moment they see us. There are three of us—the regular number of a police round. Besides, a good many of them know me personally."

"Listen to the various cues and signals:

"'Ohe Eugene!' Ohe Zehe!'"

"That is a prostitute warning her 'lover' that there is danger lurking in the air."

"There goes 'Eugene' running out of that saloon. He is a pretty sight, isn't he, with his greasy, tattered trousers, his flat cap and his tawdry embroidered slippers."

"This den which we are about to enter, No. 29, is a fair sample of the licensed houses of this abominable street."

"Observe how old and battered it is."

"The ground floor is a sitting-room, or parlor, for the girls and the landlady. In this cramped and dismal den there are three pine tables covered with cloths so greasy and filthy that it makes one's stomach rise to look at them."

One of these tables is placed crossways and faces the door."

"It serves as a desk or office."

"In one corner is a tottering stove on which the meals are cooked. The fire is out and on the top of it, on a piece of greasy paper, are a long sausage, a half empty bottle of wine and a dirty tumbler."

"From the low, smoke-grimed roof of this apartment hangs a kerosene lamp. The light, directed by a paper shade, falls on a big box, painted red, on which is a foul straw mattress. An old woman is stretched out upon it, snoring, with her huge dirty-gray curls and her toothless mouth wide open, she is hideous to behold."

"The landlady, an enormous woman, is sick in bed. Her husband mounts guard at the desk and oversees the business of the den."

"He is a small, insignificant creature, sixty years of age. Thin and dry as parchment, he presents a comical appearance as he sits at the receipt of custom in his shirtsleeves, wearing the regulation silk cap of a rowdy."

CHAPTER XIV.

PROSTITUTES.—THE EXECUTION OF PRANZINI.

In front of this horrible and weird-looking old man is a huge blackboard on which he keeps, with a piece of chalk, the accounts of the den. For here nobody has any credit and every "transaction" between one of the inmates and a customer is recorded on the blackboard.

About two o'clock in the morning each girl settles with the old man and pays over to him that share of her "earnings" which belong to the house.

This den consists of three floors which are connected by a bare wooden stair case, filthy and slippery with all manner of uncleanness, and which is barely three feet in width.

There are six rooms, two on every floor. One is reserved for the special use of the mistress of the house. The others are at the service of the inmates. Their furniture is represented by a miserable painted wooden bed without pillows, and the sheets of which are only changed once a month, a miserable little pine table and a cracked pitcher of water.

"The inmates of the place," remarked the Chief of Detectives, "are just about what you would expect, Monsieur le Prefect. They are quite in keeping with the furniture and fixtures. They are all played-out, brandy-sodden, bloated and diseased. The youngest of the lot is over forty years of age. After having spent their lives in the grossest debauchery, they consider themselves lucky to be able to finish their miserable existences in this manner.

"They enjoy a certain amount of liberty, and for their meals frequent the neighboring wine shops, where for a few pennies they get a bit of beef, bread or cheese. There, too, they find among the drunken hangers-on customers, whom they entertain for a trifle."

"What will become of all those prostitutes when the Rue des Filles Dieu is cleaned out?" inquired the Prefect.

"The younger ones will rejoin their comrades of the Rue de Venicc. The others will be found in hospitals, workhouses and asylums. Every evening they gather in swarms in a little alley which opens in the Rues Sainte-Foy and Saint Spire, the passage du Caire and the Rue des Filles-Dieu, whence they issue, at nightfall, like vermin to solicit customers.

"These crowds are always noisy and vociferous and their disturbances last for hours. Sometimes their disputes become out-and-out rows and riots in which the combatants black each other's eyes and pull each other's hair out in handfulls.

"Nobody separates them and unless the police interfere they close the rows themselves as they begin them."

The two functionaries dropped into one of the neighboring wine shops.

"What a crowd of women," exclaimed the Prefect. "Some of them are by no means bad looking. There's an exception, though, that woman who is eating crawfish over there. She has lost her entire nose."

"That is Irma, the Bricktop. Her lover cut her nose off by striking her in the face with a broken bottle,"

"Look at the boldness of these women—barcheaded

all of them, some with their sleeves rolled up, crowding round that young man. They grab him by the arm and he actually has to fight with ferocity to get rid of them."

"The youngest are the worst. They hunt their male victims with more pertinacity than the old beldames. Some of them are not fifteen years of age.

"Every evening, just as to-night, our most attractive boulevards are overrun by prostitutes and their lovers, by hawkers of transparent playing cards, peddlers of questionable drugs and an army of abominable riff-raff. The women, as well as the men, think nothing of exchanging the most foul-mouthed language with people who repel their offers.

"Sprawling on benches you will see thieves, vagabonds and tramps of every variety—creatures without homes and without occupations—who fill the air with their indecencies.

"You cannot sit down in a cafe without being pestered by beggars and mendicants of all kinds, sorts, sizes and ages. Many of them are children—poor little ragged, bare-footed wretches, who beseech a penny while sticking under your nose a bundle of pencils or some other trifle.

"So great is the demoralization of the criminal classes, that even children are taking to suicide. Only this evening three young creatures, in their misery and despair, were about to throw themselves into the canal when arrested.

"The very atmosphere is loaded with moral corruption and decay."

The Prefect suddenly put his hand on his subordinate's shoulder.

"It is nearly daybreak," he said, "and at dawn, as you know, Pranzini pays the penalty of his crime."

"The crowd of debased ruffians which await the execution," replied the Chief, "will better than anything else illustrate my remarks on the depravity of modern Paris. Let us go and look at it."

On their way to the gloomy prison in front of which the notorious criminal was about to expiate his hideous acts, the Chief said:

"There are people who actually doubt that this wretch is the only assassin involved in the case.

"Their theory is that he was only an accomplice, the chief criminal walking about unmolested. M. Fondvillars, formerly of *Le Temps*, made an extraordinary statement. M. Fondvillars had interviews with Mlle. Sabatier and with Maitre Demange and another well-known member of the Paris bar. The latter asserts his conviction that the mysterious dark man seen in Pranzini's company the day after the crime was the real author of the murders, and is living in Paris near Odeon. This man was formerly his client, and is known to the police as a dissipated character and adventurer.

"On making further inquiries it was ascertained that the man in question is a little Austrian Jew of a dried-up, Greek appearance, slight, forbidding, with black and very arched eyebrows and name not unlike Geissler. M. Fondvillars, in his written communication, said:

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"You cannot sit down in a cafe without being pestered by beggars and mendicants of all kinds, sorts, sizes and ages. Many of them are children—poor little ragged, bare-footed wretches, who beseech a penny while sticking under your nose a bundle of pencils or some other trifle.

"So great is the demoralization of the criminal classes, that even children are taking to suicide. Only this evening three young creatures, in their misery and despair, were about to throw themselves into the canal when arrested.

"The very atmosphere is loaded with moral corruption and decay."

The Prefect suddenly put his hand on his subordinate's shoulder.

"It is nearly daybreak," he said, "and at dawn, as you know, Pranzini pays the penalty of his crime."

"The crowd of debased ruffians which await the execution," replied the Chief, "will better than anything else illustrate my remarks on the depravity of modern Paris. Let us go and look at it."

On their way to the gloomy prison in front of which the notorious criminal was about to expiate his hideous acts, the Chief said:

"There are people who actually doubt that this wretch is the only assassin involved in the case.

"Their theory is that he was only an accomplice, the chief criminal walking about un molested. M. Fondvillars, formerly of *Le Temps*, made an extraordinary statement. M. Fondvillars had interviews with Mlle. Sabatier and with Maitre Demange and another well-known member of the Paris bar. The latter asserts his conviction that the mysterious dark man seen in Pranzini's company the day after the crime was the real author of the murders, and is living in Paris near Odeon. This man was formerly his client, and is known to the police as a dissipated character and adventurer.

"On making further inquiries it was ascertained that the man in question is a little Austrian Jew of a dried-up, Greek appearance, slight, forbidding, with black and very arched eyebrows and name not unlike Geissler. M. Fondvillars, in his written communication, said:

"Proceedings were actually instituted against this man, but were stopped suddenly on the intervention of an influential creole lady."

When the two officials reached the prison the crowd seething and foaming about the gates of La Roquette were in such an unsatisfied mood that unless somebody had been guillotined there would have been riots. Voices were shouting in chorus:

C'est Pranzini-zini-zini

C'est Pranzini qu'il nous faut.

Oh! oh! oh! oh!

This outlandish chant, echoed and re-echoed by wine-soaked throats, nightly aroused Pranzini from his slumbers. His keepers told him that it was only an *emeute*, and the wretched man went to sleep again.

The crowd since midnight had grown and multiplied, and there were not less than twenty thousand people gathered about. All the riffraff and scum of Belleville, all the disreputable women and idlers of the Boulevard Montmartre, all the morbid foreigners at present sojourning in Paris, and all the journalists whom duty compels to be there, gathered about the approaches to the grim, frowning prison on this dark and solemn night in the Place de la Roquette.

The feeble glimmer of a dozen gas lamps shed a dismal light upon the crowd pacing up and down in front of the prison. The trees which dot the place were filled with jeering gamins, who defy the injunctions of the police to "come down out of that." In carriages there were hundreds of *cocottes* in gay toilets, drinking champagne and smoking cigarettes. Here and there a weary tramp was curled up and asleep against the wall or on a bench. How anyone can sleep at all in such a tumult is strange indeed, and yet long habit enables scores of them to do it. Every now and then a fresh gang of blackguards arrived swearing, smoking and shouting, or a carriage drew up, loaded with passengers relatively respectable, and is greeted with the derisive chorus of:

Voilà Pranzini qui arrive!

To while away the time the crowd made occasional excursions around the corner to a refreshment shed in the Rue de la Folie Regnault—a predestined name, surely. When M. Deibler, the executioner, and his dread assistants were preparing the guillotine during the evening, long after the regulation police hours, the wine shops in the neighborhood of the terrible machine, were crowded with customers. Once or twice the "executor of lofty deeds," as they call the executioner here, and his underlings stole in to refresh themselves with a drop of drink, but very few of the idlers recognized them, and those who did, of course, failed to get any information out of them.

New couplets had been added to the lugubrious song already mentioned:

C'est sa tete, sa tete, sa tete,

C'est sa tete qu'il nous faut!

Oh! oh! oh!

Shortly after midnight the rattle of hoofs and clanking of sabres announced the arrival of mounted *gendarmes* and *gardes de paix*. In a twinkling the place before the prison was cleared of all but a few journalists and the police agents. The crowd, driven back on all sides, formed again at either end of the Place, shouting and singing. Then came a long pause. About three o'clock the rumble of wheels was heard in the direction of the Rue de la Folie Regnault.

A few minutes afterward a cart came jolting over the paving stones toward the entrance to the little avenue facing the prison gates. There it halted and the executioner's assistants jumped off. Then for half an hour a sound of hammering rose above the songs and catcalls. "Monsieur de Paris," and his men were preparing the "woods of justice" for the tragic business before them. As the hammering ceased, a cab drove up to the Place. The prison chaplain, Abbe Faure, stepped out with the *procureur de la republique*, and hurrying past the guillotine disappeared in the prison door. The morning opened damp and lowering, but it seemed to have little depressing effect upon the crowd, which waited until the fatal knife fell with a patience worthy of a better cause.

Pranzini was awakened out of a sound sleep at 4:45 o'clock by the jailers. Father Beauquesne, chaplain of La Roquette, entered the prisoner's cell and exhorted him to be courageous. Pranzini replied that he had no fear, but regretted that the only favor he had asked—that of permission to see his mother—had been refused. He reiterated his profession of innocence, and refused to make confession to the priest, saying: "Father, you do your duty; I will do mine." While being dressed for the block he declared he was glad that his life was to be taken, as he preferred death to penal servitude for life. He reproached the Chief of Police for having called, as Pranzini alleged, false witnesses against him during his trial. When he had been conducted to the scaffold he appeared to be quite calm and displayed considerable assurance. He kissed the crucifix presented to him by the priest, but he refused to kiss the priest when the latter proffered the farewell embrace. Pranzini was at this moment skillfully grasped and suddenly thrown upon the guillotine. Its great knife fell and the murderer's head was severed from his body. The head was at once placed in a wagon and carried at a gallop to the Ivey cemetery, where it was buried, after the regular funeral ceremony had been performed over it. The Faculty of Medicine claimed the body and it was surrendered to them.

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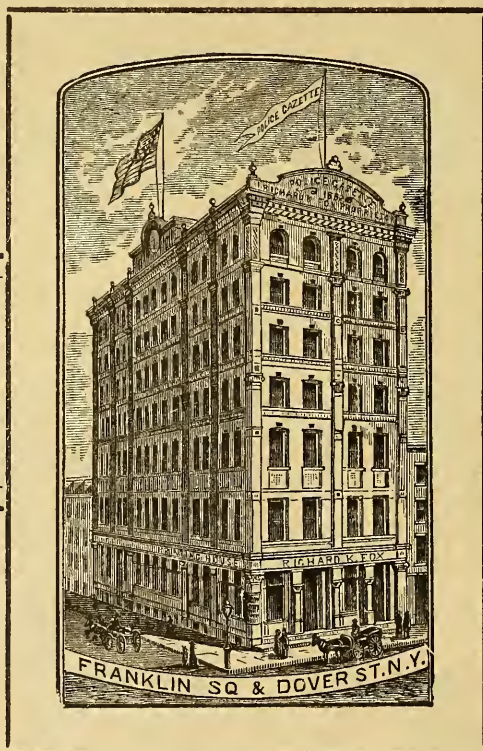
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